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AN
E S S A Y
ON THE
I M P O L I C Y
OF THE
AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE.

IN TWO PARTS.

THE SECOND EDITION.

BY

The Rev. T. CLARKSON, M. A.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. PHILLIPS, 'GEORGE-YARD,
LOMBARD-STREET.

MDCCLXXXVIII.



TO
WILLIAM WILBERFORCE Esq.
ONE OF THE
MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT
FOR THE
COUNTY OF YORK.

S I R,

TO a Gentleman, like you, whose publick and private actions are founded on principle, and who are content with doing your duty without the tribute of popular applause, I fear that the perusal of this page may be rather distressing: nor am I sure that I shall not, in some degree, incur your censure, for having printed it without either your permission or your knowledge. You will consider, however, how difficult it is for me, who am acquainted with your exertions in the cause of humanity and freedom, to pass them over on such an occasion as this. I trust, therefore, that in addressing this little book to you, as a zealous advocate in behalf of the oppressed Africans,

Africans, you will excuse the liberty I have taken, under the circumstance now explained; and I must intreat you to believe, that no encomium should ever have been paid you by me, unless I had believed it to have been previously earned.

I have the Honour to be, Sir,

Your sincere,

And obedient Servant,

THOMAS CLARKSON.

PREFACE.

P R E F A C E.

IT may be expected, that, in offering so many articles of information to the publick, and such as will materially affect the policy of the slave trade, something should be said of their authenticity, or the assurance the publick may have, that they are true:

The productions of Africa are the first objects of consideration in this work. Whatever I have said relative to the existence of these, has been collected from *living* evidence, and of the greatest part of them I have now specimens *in my possession*.

The cruelties, practised by the officers of slave vessels on the persons of their unfortunate crews, (which is another object of consideration) has been stated from various *depositions*, voluntarily made last year. I have had also *ocular demonstration*, as far as a sight of their mangled bodies will be admitted as a proof, that such cruelties were exercised upon them; and I have had the satisfaction of making some of the perpetrators *acknowledge* them, by the payment of a fine.

The loss of seamen, both in the slave trade and other trades, (which is a principal object of consideration in this work) is so exact, that, though it was necessary to have an account of no less than *seven or eight thousand* of them to ascertain the fact, yet the name of every individual can be given.

The list of plantations, that have been cited as having supported themselves independently of the slave trade, has been made up either from letters lately received on the subject, or from the oral statement of the proprietors themselves, or from those gentlemen who became acquainted with their situation by living near them.

With respect to other statements, which I may distinguish by the name of miscellaneous, they are of equal authority. I have always gone for them myself to the fountain head; and, with the assistance of my worthy associates in the cause, neither labour nor expense has been spared in obtaining them from that quarter.

Having said a few words on the authenticity of the pages now to be offered to the publick, I shall only add, that I shall think myself sufficiently repaid for any trouble I have taken, if they tend to throw any light on the subject; and to convince mankind, that Providence has universally made the scale to preponderate in favour of humanity; or that the African slave trade has not that *sound policy* for its basis, which people have but too generally imagined.

PART I.

P A R T I.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

IN a former Essay, on the "Commerce of the Human Species," I particularly enlarged on the Injustice and Inhumanity of that, which is exhibited in the African trade. In the present, I shall undertake to shew (unless I deceive myself greatly) that it is as *impolitical*, as I have proved it to be inhuman and unjust.

There are many general arguments that must occur to every sensible and disinterested man who is at all acquainted with the subject, against this commerce, independently of its iniquity or its barbarous effects.

The first connection, which the Europeans ever had with the Africans, was for *Slaves*. This continued to be for many years the only traffick for which they had intercourse with each other. Some British merchants, however, finding by the reports of their agents, who had visited this coast, that it abounded with gums, wax, ambergris, honey, ivory, and gold, held out to the natives the prospect of a new and additional trade. The Africans were no sooner made acquainted with, than they embraced the plan. They began to collect the different articles accordingly, and have continued in the pursuit of them, though not without hazard to their persons, to the present day.

The commercial connection between the Europeans and Africans became by these means more extensive than before, and continued on this scale, till it was discovered that the same continent abounded with many valuable woods.

The merchants of that day, apprized of the discovery, immediately proposed their schemes as their predecessors

had done before, but despaired of success; conceiving that the Africans, who bore the character of an indolent people, would never engage in so laborious an employment as that of cutting wood.

They were, however, agreeably disappointed. The Africans embarked in this with as much alacrity as in the former scheme. They went more than two hundred miles into the inland country, cut down wood similar to that which had been pointed out, and in the rainy seasons brought it in their canoes to the ships, enabling the same merchants to gain a profit on the new article, though sold at an easy price. This trade was distinguished by the name of the *wood* trade, and is carried on more extensively now, than at any former period; though the whole of the trade in the natural productions of the country bears no sort of comparison with that in slaves.

This narration of facts carries with it, first, a proof of the *commercial spirit* of the Africans, who have no sooner had a new and additional line of intercourse pointed out, than they have embraced it.

Now, if we consider that the African soil is undoubtedly more fertile than that of any other quarter of the globe; if we consider that its natives are possessed of the commercial spirit described; that they speak the European languages; that they are adepts in arithmetical calculations, and capable of conducting trade, it must surely be the highest *impolicy* that such a country, and possessed by such inhabitants, should be scarcely known but as a mart for *human blood*. It must, I repeat, be impolicy in the highest degree in the Europeans, because, under the circumstances now described, much higher advantages might be derived in another line of trade.

It shews, secondly, that the difficulty of engaging the Africans in any new line of commerce would not be so great, as has been generally imagined.

It is certainly much to be feared, that, while *slaves* continue to be the grand desideratum of our African intercourse, very little can be expected from any additional trade in the natural productions of the country. Not but that more of the natives would be found to embark in it than there are at present, but that these would be so few
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for the purpose, while the chief part of our attention was directed to the other, that it could hardly be carried to that extent, which would render it of much national importance.

But suppose that the slave trade were abolished; suppose that we now entered into the one with as much zeal and alacrity, as we had done formerly in the other; would it not be reasonable to presume, that, under such encouragements, we should soon have a valuable and an extensive trade? If the Africans could go two hundred miles into the inland country, and engage in the laborious employment of cutting wood, it is reasonable to think, that they could be brought to become the cultivators of their own lands. I presume also, that *free labour* could be introduced among them: it being no more difficult to introduce cultivation, or *any system* of cultivation there, than it was, since the beginning of the slave trade, to have given birth to the various offices of brokers upon the coast, to have communicated to them the European languages, to have introduced the different media of exchange, and to have established the whole of that regular system of trade, which subsists at the present day.

These observations being made, I shall lay down two positions: first, that the Africans, by proper encouragement, can be brought into *habits of labour*: and secondly, that *free labour* can be made the medium, through which the productions of their country may be collected, or brought to maturity and use.

These are the only data, which I shall require; and, having laid them down, I shall proceed immediately to the point, making a replication to all the arguments, which I have ever yet found to be advanced in defence of the policy of the trade in slaves.

C H A P. I.

S E C T I O N I.

The patrons of the trade have been long accustomed to advance, that it is a trade of *great value to the nation*.

I confess that I have never been able to comprehend their meaning. I shall therefore, before I attempt to make a reply, canvass the expression.

Do they mean that the slaves taken from Africa become labourers in the colonies? that these labourers make sugar? that this sugar produces a revenue, and that the trade therefore is of great national importance? If this be their meaning, I reply, that it is *sugar* that produces the revenue, and not the slave.—That the cane can be cultivated by *free men*, and farther, that it can be cultivated, under certain regulations, without the importation of another African from the coast.

To suppose then that they ascribe to the instrument which may be varied, what is due only to the fixed object of cultivation, or, at any rate, to a concatenation of circumstances, is to suppose them to be incapable of discrimination, and is therefore a supposition, which I am not at liberty to make.

Do they mean again, that slaves employ ships to transport them? that these ships employ seamen, and that these seamen are the pillars of the state? But these are but *appendages* of the trade. Rice, cotton, indigo, tobacco, and other productions of the African soil, would, in this point of view, be equally beneficial.—I presume then they must mean that slaves, considered of themselves as a commodity, and without any of the appendages described, constitute an article of commerce, that is highly beneficial to the state.

This being presumed, I shall state the question in the following manner.

Africa has two sorts of commodities to offer us,—her natural productions, and—her slaves.—The question is, in which of the two, considered abstractedly by themselves, it is most politic to deal. If in consequence of such a
comparison

comparison it should appear, that a traffick in the one would be of much more national importance than in the other, I presume that the other, inasmuch as it engrosses the principal part of our attention, and diverts it from one that should be more beneficial, will be allowed to be *impolitick*.

To reply to the argument advanced, I shall first turn my attention to the woods of Africa.

In the preceding chapter it was observed there were two trades established upon the coast, independent of, and having no connection with, the trade in slaves. The first established was that in gums, wax, ambergris, honey, ivory, and gold. The second was that in woods. These trades are now united. The merchant, who fits out a vessel for wood, fits it out also for as many of the other commodities as he can procure. However, the great bulk of his cargo, and object of his voyage, being that of wood, his vessel is termed a *wood vessel*. I make this distinction, not only because the merchant makes it himself, but because I shall have occasion to use the expression in many parts of the work.

The first African woods, that were known to be objects of commercial importance, were *Camwood* and *Barwood*. These were imported by themselves for some years. In process of time, however, it was found that *Ebony* was a native of the coast : and soon afterwards *Lignum Vitæ* was discovered.

These are the only African woods that are brought home as commercial articles at the present day. But as we already import, or shall import in a little time as much of these as can possibly be consumed, no new prospects are to be formed from thence. I shall therefore pass them over, and advert to such, as being now in embryo, would, if called forth by the abolition of the trade in slaves, afford a substitute for it of *greater* benefit to the nation.

That Africa abounds with hidden treasures, may be collected from those, which accident has already discovered. It is certain, however, that this extensive continent is as yet unexplored. The vegetable productions are but little known, and the fossils less. The barks, woods, roots, fruits, and leaves, have been hardly noticed by any naturalist ;

naturalist; and the stones, earths, bitumens, and ores, have not been so much as seen by the eye of a chemical observer.

Nor is this ignorance of the natural productions of Africa to excite our wonder or surprise. The Africans, mostly in an unimproved state, and at best ignorant of the various mechanical arts that are practised in Europe, and of the various commodities that are the objects of European commerce, cannot be supposed to be capable of pointing out, of themselves, such of their own productions as would be valuable in trade.

The Europeans, on the other hand, that is, nine in ten, who visit this extensive continent, visit it for *slaves*. This is the grand object of their voyage. It engrosses all their thoughts, and occasions them to overlook even the common productions of the place. And so true is this observation, that many, who have visited this coast for years, can give no better account of it in this respect, than those who have never seen it at all. I must add to, that little leisure, and still less opportunity would be afforded them, in the present posture of affairs there, of gratifying their wishes, even had they a turn for botanical or chemical pursuits.

To these circumstances then, but ultimately to the *trade in slaves*, is to be ascribed the ignorance before mentioned. Under these disadvantages, the reader will hardly expect that I shall be able to say much of the woods of Africa. Such, however, as accident has discovered within the last three years, shall immediately be pointed out.

Within the period now assigned it has been fully substantiated, that mahogany grows upon the coast. About eighteen tons of it were collected there, and imported into this country in the year 1786.

Not long after this, a vessel, having delivered her slaves in the West Indies, returned home. In discharging some firewood, which had been taken in upon the coast, a small billet was discovered of a different appearance from the rest. This excited the attention of the discoverer, who sent it to be polished. It proved, in consequence of this trial, to be the tulip wood, so called from its resemblance

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to that flower, the ground of it being of a straw colour, and inlaid with crimson veins. This wood would be of the greatest importance to cabinet workers and inlayers, and so valuable, that they would be glad to purchase it at the rate of three shillings per pound.

The next species of wood, that excited the attention of the importer, was a small log brought home in one of the wood vessels before described. It was of a pale straw colour. The veins of it were yellow, and had a beautiful appearance. It was remarkably light, and yet close grained, and seemed peculiarly adapted for musical instruments. It would have made, however, elegant light furniture, and would have been in great request with the artists of the former description.

About the same time, in which this log was discovered, another wood vessel, belonging to the same port, brought home a specimen of the bark of a tree, that produced a very valuable yellow dye, and far beyond any other ever in use in this country.

The virtues of it were discovered in the following manner. A gentleman, resident upon the coast, ordered some wood to be cut down to erect an hut. While the people were felling it, he was standing by. During the operation, some juice flew from the bark of it, and stained one of the ruffles of his shirt. He thought that the stain would have washed out, but on wearing it again, found that the yellow spot was much more bright and beautiful than before, and that it gained in lustre every subsequent time of washing. Pleased with the discovery, which he knew to be of so much importance to the manufacturers of Great Britain, and for which a considerable premium had been offered, he sent home the bark now mentioned as a specimen. He is since unfortunately dead; and little hopes are to be entertained of falling in with this tree again, unless similar accidents should discover it, or a change should take place in our commercial concerns with Africa.

I shall now mention another valuable wood, which, like all those that have been pointed out, was discovered by accident in the same year. Another wood vessel, belonging to the same port, was discharging her cargo. Among the barwood a small billet was discovered, the
colour

colour of which was so superior to that of the rest, as to lead the observer to suspect, that it was of a very different species; though it is clear that the natives, by cutting it of the same size and dimensions, and by bringing it on board at the same time, had, on account of its red colour, mistaken it for the other. One half of this billet was cut away in experiments. It was found to produce a colour that emulated the carmine, and was deemed to be so valuable in the dying trade, that an offer was immediately made of sixty guineas per ton, for any quantity that could be procured. The other half has been since sent back to the coast, as a guide to collect more of the same sort; though it is a matter of doubt, whether, under the circumstances that have been related, the same tree can be ascertained again.

I could mention here several other woods, which would perhaps be new to the reader, and which would form a valuable branch of trade; but those which I have mentioned already, are so important of themselves, as to preclude the necessity of a longer list. I shall therefore confine my observations to these.

If the slave trade were abolished, and the two positions, mentioned in the former section, realized, it is evident that a trade might be struck out in the preceding articles to great advantage and extent. The demand for mahogany is increasing not only in this country, but in Germany, to a considerable amount. Suppose then that the new trade were established, what advantages would result from the importation of this article in particular from the coast?

These advantages, I reply, will be best seen by comparison. The principal part of the mahogany, which we import, comes from the Bay of Honduras, and is cut by *slaves*. In Africa, according to the position laid down, it would be cut by *free* men; a circumstance of the highest importance; as the exertions of *free*, compared with those of *servile* labour, are at least in the proportion of three to two. The insurance also from the Bay of Honduras to the British ports is from five to ten, while that from Africa to the same place is but two and a half per cent. The raw article, therefore, from these circumstances, and additionally

additionally that of lower freightage, would be brought into the hands of the merchant and manufacturer, cheaper by more than a third than it comes to them at present.

I must add too, that the voyage in the latter case is much less dangerous than in the former. That the insurer would be benefited by the change ; and that as it is, a maxim long established, that the cheaper the material the greater the demand for it, a considerable increase would be made to the exportation of this article ; a circumstance, in every point of view beneficial to the nation.

With respect to the other woods, those for *cabinet work* and *dying*, no advantage can result from comparison, because there is no other place upon the globe, from whence such treasures could be derived.

The former, however, would certainly be of great consequence. We already excel all the artists of the world in this particular department, and export largely.—But what an additional scope would the many and variegated woods of Africa afford to the taste and ingenuity of our countrymen ! It is to this taste and ingenuity, conspicuous in the variety of patterns, and beautiful and harmonious disposition of things, that we are to attribute our superiority in this line of mechanism, and that we become mechanics for the world.

But with respect to the latter, they are certainly beyond all valuation. It is well known, at least in particular manufacturing towns, that the African dyes are superiour to those of any other quarter of the globe.—Our manufacturers have long viewed them with a jealous eye. They have promised themselves prodigious fortunes, and their country a lasting and extensive benefit, could they but make themselves masters of the art and mystery of the composition of these invaluable dyes. It is certain, however, that almost all the colours, which the Africans use, except that of blue, are procured from their own trees, either by friction or decoction ; and that though they have merit in the preparation of them, yet the great mystery would cease, if the slave trade was abolished, as such an event would give us an opportunity of making the discovery, and of introducing them as articles of commerce.

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I shall make no further observation on this head, than that if accident has discovered such invaluable treasures as those described, what might not be expected, if this extensive continent were explored? It at present affords us, comparatively speaking, scarcely any thing else but slaves. Will any person assert, that the woods of Africa alone, without reference to any of its other productions, would not be more lucrative both to the merchant, the manufacturer, and the nation, than the whole trade in *slaves*?

SECTION II.

But the woods, though uncommonly curious and valuable, are not the only articles that are to be put into the scale on this occasion. Another valuable commerce would be opened to us in other commodities, such as drugs, peppers, and spices.

That Africa abounds with many valuable drugs, is not only evident from the testimony of those who have resided there, but from our late and present importations. We have already derived many valuable drugs from that quarter: but these, like the woods, have been accidentally discovered, while others still more valuable, are yet in embryo.

The first, that were the objects of commerce, were gum senegal, sanguis draconis, almonds, and afterwards palm oil.

In process of time the virtues of gum copal were discovered by the French, who imported it into their own country. We were not long unacquainted with this event, or with the advantages that resulted from the discovery. We endeavoured to obtain a description of the tree that produced it, and having succeeded in our attempts, pointed it out to the natives, and brought its produce home.

The next that were brought to light, were gum rubrum asfringens, and gum euphorbium. These continued to be the last on the list, till the year 1786, when gum guaiacum made its appearance from the coast.

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All these articles, or at least specimens of them, have been brought from thence into this country, and we have therefore a positive proof of their existence there. I cannot say, however, that they have been regularly brought. In some years not more than two or three, and in others little more than specimens of them have been collected; no regular plan, as in other trades, having been yet established there; nor would any such plan be likely to be attended with success, whilst the *slave trade* engrosses our attention.

Without mentioning the variety of drugs that might be brought from Africa, I shall immediately point out the advantages of having them from thence.

It is clear that all those, which we obtain from Spanish America and the Brazils, are clogged with an expense, that would be avoided in having them from the other quarter. In the first place there is a double freightage, and in the second, commission, both of which would be saved were we to import them immediately from the coast. The importer too would procure them at a less rate from hence, than even from the East Indies or Turkey, which are the only remaining places, from which he collects them at present.

I come now to the peppers of Africa. The first, that was discovered or imported, was malaguetta, or grains of Paradise. This has now become an article of trade, and is regularly brought to us, either by the wood or slave vessels, every year.

The second was the long pepper. A few barrels of this have been occasionally imported, but in such small quantities, as scarcely to deserve notice.

The third was the black pepper. This was found to be of a greater pungency, and of a finer flavour than the Asiatick. Two casks of it were brought to England about six years ago: and this, I believe, was the only specimen from the coast ever exhibited in this country.

The fourth was the cayenne. A captain of one of the wood vessels procured a small quantity of it, and brought it home in the year 1787.

I have hitherto mentioned such of the African peppers, as being similar to those from other quarters now in use, are known by name. There was one, however, dis-

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covered about twenty years ago on the same coast, with the name of which not any person, to whom it was shewn, was at all acquainted. It was brought to Liverpool in a slave vessel, and preserved; and was of such uncommon fragrance and flavour, as to have retained its qualities to the present day.

This account of the preceding articles, but particularly that of the latter, will give the reader an additional proof of the riches to be found in the African soil. He will see the great advantages, which would result from a trade in these alone. But he will never be able to estimate the loss which we sustain by the trade in *slaves*, which hinders the country from being farther explored, and those inexhaustible treasures from coming forth, which are now buried and concealed.

The next article is that of spices.

The only spices, that have been yet found in Africa, are the cassia or wild cinnamon, which is plentiful, and the nutmeg, of which a few solitary plants have been discovered. These were mostly in a wild and unimproved state; but by proper care and attention, there is no doubt, but that they might be brought to as great perfection, as those in any other place.

The Dutch supply us at present with these articles. They have become of late very exorbitant in their demands, and, were they still to increase their prices, we should be obliged to submit, as they have a monopoly of this trade.

Were our attention turned to the encouragement of these articles upon the coast, it is clear that we might be the importers of our own spices, and break the monopoly of the Dutch.

The great advantages that would arise from having them from this quarter, shall immediately be pointed out. The difference in a voyage only from England to Africa and back, and from Holland to the Moluccas and back, is at least sixteen thousand miles. The wages of seamen employed of course so much longer in this voyage than in the other, the greater consumption of provisions, and wear and tear of ships, clearly point out, that if the Dutch were to lower their present prices to one half, these articles
would

would not come into our hands at so cheap a rate from thence, as those which would be imported from Africa. Now if we add to this the considerations of double freightage, insurance, and commission, and that the spices of Africa would be cultivated by free men, whereas in the Moluccas they are cultivated by slaves, it is a matter capable of proof, that we should import them from that continent for *one fifth* of their present price.

There is yet one circumstance, of great importance, which ought never to be forgotten. We pay for the greatest part of these articles at present *in money*. Were the trade alluded to established in Africa, we should pay for them in our *manufactures*.

SECTION III.

Among the other articles, which the African continent produces, are tobacco, rice, and indigo, each of which would form of itself a distinct and valuable branch of trade.

Tobacco is to be found in almost every division of this continent in the greatest luxuriance, and, from the peculiar richness of the soil, is superior in quality to that which America produces.

Rice is to be found in most parts of Africa, but grows so luxuriantly on the grain coast in particular, that a supply might be drawn from thence sufficient for all the markets of Europe. It is extraordinary, that this rice should be finer in flavour, of a greater substance, more wholesome and capable of preservation, than the rice of any other country whatever, and that in every point of view, it should be superiour to the rest.

Nor is the indigo of Africa, with which that continent abounds, less conspicuous for its pre-eminence in colour. The blue is so much more beautiful and permanent than that which is extracted from the same plant in other parts, that many have been led to doubt, whether the African cloths, brought into this country, were dyed with indigo or not. They apprehended that the colour in these, which became more beautiful upon washing, must

have proceeded from another weed, or have been an extraction from some of the woods, which are celebrated for dying there. The matter, however, has been clearly ascertained. A gentleman procured two or three of the balls which had been just prepared by the Africans for use. He brought them home, and, upon examination, found them to be the leaves of indigo rolled up, and in a very simple state.

The reader may imagine by my account of the productions of Africa hitherto named, and by my statement of their superiority to others, that I have been rather dealing in fiction, than describing their real state. But it is well known that Africa possesses the most fertile soil of any in the globe: and I appeal to those who have visited this coast, and to some of the manufacturing towns in this kingdom, if my assertions are not strictly true; if the rice of Africa is not beyond all others in point of flavour, substance, and capacity of preservation; and if the indigo is not of that beautiful, permanent nature, as to have a title to the pre-eminence ascribed.

I shall now observe, that the two first articles are obtained at present from America; the last in part from the same place, and in part from the British colonies, and those of foreign nations.

This being premised, the advantages that would result from having them from Africa, will easily appear.

In the first place it is clear from the observations made, that all the three articles are at present produced by the labour of slaves. In Africa they would be produced by free men, a circumstance, which would bring them into the hands of the merchant and manufacturer, cheaper by one third.

There are also additional circumstances, peculiar to two of them, which would have the same tendency.

In America rice generally grows in swampy places, which are destructive to the health of the cultivators, all which cultivators are to be succeeded, if they perish, at a great expense. There are plantations, however, which are situated upon drier land; but these are contiguous to the banks of rivers, and require to be occasionally overflowed. For this purpose flood-gates are constructed, and,

and, below these, others of the same kind, that the water may be taken off at discretion: otherwise the crops would be inevitably destroyed. The construction and repair of these must add considerably to the expense. The African rice, on the other hand, grows on the hilly parts, neither endangering the health of the cultivator, nor requiring any other moisture or overflowing than the usual rain.

Indigo also is prejudicial to the health of those who manufacture it. This is occasioned by the offensiveness of the effluvia, which arises from it at that time. Now as these manufacturers are *slaves*, it is impossible that the proprietors of them can furnish it at so cheap a rate, as those who would employ *free* men, and who, in the case of the death of their labourers, could renew them without expense.

Another circumstance, worthy of consideration, is this, that a considerable portion of human life would be saved, not only because free men would have contrivances, which are not so much as thought of for slaves, but because the Africans have a method of preparing this article for use with but little detriment to their health; so that whether it were to be manufactured by slaves, or free men, it would come with the highest prospect of gain from this quarter.

I must not forget to add, that where we obtain indigo from the colonists of foreign nations, there is a double freightage, insurance, and commission, all which would be saved, were the article to be brought to us from the coast.

With these advantages then in particular, and additionally with those of free labour which have been stated, it is clear, that Africa would afford the cheapest market to the merchant and manufacturer, from whence they could derive the three articles described; and that the good effects of thus changing the place of export would, in process of time, be so conspicuous, as to give us reason to hope, that the nation would soon be reimbursed for the treasures expended in the loss of America.

If there is any other advantage to be apprehended from the change, it must be this:—Our trade with America, since the late peace, has been rather a detriment than a gain. In consequence of the unprincipled conduct of
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many of the Americans, the merchant here has been ruined, the manufacturer has shared his fate, and numbers have felt the shock. Under these disadvantages, we must still continue to trade with them, because we want their commodities. From Africa we might derive the same articles, but in greater perfection, and with no risk. The merchant would receive for his goods a cargo, more valuable than that which he sent there, and would of course have no necessity to give credit, or to be uneasy, as in the present posture of affairs, about remittances for his debts.

S E C T I O N IV.

Though I have already mentioned many valuable productions of the coast, others still remain to be spoken of. Upon these, however, I shall not expatiate, except upon cotton, an article of too much importance to this country to be mentioned in general terms.

That the reader may form a notion of this importance, I shall inform him that twenty millions of pounds were brought into Great Britain for the use of our manufacturers in the year 1786. I shall inform him also that two pounds of cotton, which cost the manufacturer six shillings, are worth, when manufactured into mullin, about five pounds in the gross. What a prodigious advantage to this country, that so small a portion of this article should give birth to so much labour and profit as is equivalent to the sum now specified!

Cotton is to be found in almost every division of the coast of Africa. It is mostly in a wild and uncultivated state. The natives, however, collect it for their own use, and work it up into those beautiful cloths, which are in such estimation for their soft and silky appearance. A few pounds of it have been occasionally brought into England in the state described. Nevertheless, they have claimed the preference at our markets, and have fetched their price.

To shew the value of this article from the coast, I shall state the rank which the cotton of different countries holds with the manufacturers of the present day, who have
seen

seen specimens of it from almost every place, where it can be produced.

It is a curious circumstance, but it has been established by the experience of many years, that continents produce the finest cotton, and that the larger the islands, and of course the nearer they approximate to continents, the finer is the cotton there. In the first class is reckoned the Persian and African. In the second that from the Brazils, Siam, and Surinam. In the third that from St. Domingo; and in the fourth that from the British West India Islands.

From this account the advantage of having cotton from Africa, from whence we derive little more than specimens at present, must appear. It is of the utmost importance to the manufacturers of muslin that their cotton should be *fine*. Their complaint is, that the very finest of that, which they get from the present market, is not equal to their wishes. Could the Persian or African be obtained, they would esteem them an invaluable treasure.

But though the fine quality of the African cotton would render the importation of it so desirable to our manufacturers, yet the easy rate at which it could be procured, would be an object of great magnitude.

As the chief part of the cotton brought to us at present, comes from the colonies of other nations, I shall name one of these to shew the difference of the expense at which it could be brought from thence and from the other quarter.

The cotton, which we have from the Brazils, is first shipped for Portugal, where it is unloaded, and kept for sale. A part of it is then reshipped, on demand, and brought here.

In this case it is clear, that double freightage, double insurance, and commission, are to be charged upon it.

In the second place it pays on exportation from Portugal a duty of five per cent.

In the third it is cultivated by slaves.

These circumstances are of such importance, that, in making the estimate, it appears that the British merchant could obtain as much cotton from Africa for fifty-seven pounds, as he procures at present for an hundred from the colony now mentioned.

In making this estimate, it is clear, that I have not selected a place that would be the most favourable to my design: for the cotton that comes to us by the way of France, is not only chargeable with the same kind of expenses, but, instead of *five*, pays *twelve* per cent. on exportation.

I cannot close * my account of this article, without mentioning that cotton, crimson in the pod, is to be found in Africa. It grows principally in the Eyeo country, and is to be seen in many of the Whidah cloths. A small specimen of it was brought home in the year 1786.

The value of this cotton would be great both to the importer, and manufacturer of muslins. The former would immediately receive eight shillings for a pound of it, and the latter would gain considerably more by his ingenuity and taste. He might work it up into the white cotton in delicate spots and figures, and as both would be of their natural colour, no inconvenience would arise from washing.

The discovery of this article affords an additional proof of the numberless treasures of the African soil, and gives us reason to expect, that, if that continent were explored, we should find such curious and valuable productions, as, if related at present, would almost be beyond our belief.

S E C T I O N V.

If the reader were to be asked, what he could collect from the preceding sections, (allowing the different statements to be true) he would say, that Africa abounded with many valuable commodities; that it would be much more to our interest to deal in these, than in slaves; that the slave trade had been hitherto an insuperable impediment to the introduction of a new commerce in the commodities described; and that an opportunity would present itself of

* Besides the natural productions already named, are to be reckoned silver, wool, skins, vermillion, quicksilver, musk, silk grass, capicum, the sugar cane, the doom wood, (which the worm never enters) and a variety of other articles, upon which I have no time to expatiate.

repaying

repaying us for the loss of America, were it once abolished. These with other inferences he would immediately deduce.

Though these conclusions are so strictly to be drawn from the facts laid down, yet it would be unpardonable to withhold the sentiments of a person on this occasion, from whom they must receive such additional weight.

It is remarkable, that the late Mr. Postlethwayt, the celebrated author of the dictionary on trade and commerce, should, in a pamphlet which he published in the year 1748; not only endeavour to shew the *policy* of the slave trade, but attempt its *justification*; and that the same person having afterwards made commerce his peculiar study, and being enabled to judge better of the nature of this trade, from having been a member of the African Committee, should totally alter his sentiments both with respect to the policy and justice of it.

In his dictionary, which was a subsequent publication to that before mentioned, he states, that in Africa are to be procured gold, silver, copper, corn, rice, gums, ivory, cotton, wax, civet, ostrich feathers, dying woods, and other valuable commodities.

Among the questions, which he afterwards states, I select the following.

“ Whether it would not be *more to the interest* of all the European nations, concerned in the trade to Africa, rather to endeavour to cultivate a friendly, humane, and civilized commerce with those people into the very centre of their extended country, than to content themselves only with skimming a trifling portion of trade on the sea coasts? ”

“ Whether *the greatest hindrance and obstruction* to the Europeans cultivating an humane and Christian-like commerce with those populous countries has not *wholly* proceeded from that *unjust, inhuman, and unchristian-like traffick*, called the *slave trade*, which is carried on by the Europeans? ”

There are scarce any productions, he adds, “ in all our British American possessions, but might be cultivated on the continent of Africa; and if ever we should be unhappy enough to be *dispossessed of them*,
“ our

“ our trade in this part of the world might contribute to
“ *make us compensation.*”

Having stated these circumstances, only by way of confirmation, I shall immediately recur to the question, as stated in the early part of the present chapter, and decide upon it accordingly.

It was said there, that Africa had two sorts of commodities to offer us,—her natural productions—and her slaves; and that the question was in which of the two, considered abstractedly by themselves, it would be most *politick* to deal?

The former have already been stated, and it appears that, viewed as they have been in this abstracted light, they would afford an inexhaustible mine of wealth to our dyers and artificers in wood; that they would enable us to break the monopoly of the Dutch; would repay us for the loss of America; be the cheapest market for all sorts of raw materials for our manufacturers; and abound with other national advantages.

The latter are now to be balanced against these, as articles of commerce: Will any person come forward and say, that, considered in the same abstracted light, they are productive of *one* national advantage? The most that he can say, will be, that they are of benefit but to a few *individuals*, and those so infinitely few, when compared with those who would be benefited and enriched by the former, that he would be ashamed of the comparison.

If the slave trade then, when stripped of its appendages, is attended with no emolument to the *publick*; if, moreover, it *hinders* the introduction of one, to which, if it were compared in the same light, it would be like an *island* to a *continent*, or a *river* to a *sea*, it is surely, of all others, the most *impolitick* trade that this country can carry on.

CHAP. II.

C H A P. II.

S E C T I O N I.

Having made an inquiry, in the preceding chapter, whether it would be more to the benefit of the *publick* to trade in the natural productions of the country, or in slaves, I shall now inquire which of the two would be of greater emolument to *individuals*; for this argument has been also started, and the *policy* has been inferred from the *profits* of the trade?

There are two or three criterions, by which a valuable trade may be ascertained. These are little risk, quick returns, and a large profit. To this standard then I shall refer the trade in slaves.

There was never, perhaps, a trade more disadvantageous, in the first instance, than that which I am now considering. The competition upon the coast is at present great, and the goods which a vessel takes for the purchase of a certain number of slaves, may not, from this circumstance, be adequate to the purchase of *three-fourths* of the rated number: so that the merchant, in the first place, may buy them dearer than his calculations, and find an immediate and considerable diminution of his profit, if not the certainty of a loss.

Another circumstance, and the most important of all that renders this commerce peculiarly hazardous, is the mortality that may arise among the slaves, both during their stay upon the coast, and the middle passage. If they are treated ever so well, if every attention is paid to their convenience, or their wants, it is often impossible to prevent it; or to say, when it begins, where it is likely to end, or in what proportion they will be lost: and that some vessels have lost more than two-thirds of their slaves, the annals of Liverpool will evince.

A third circumstance is this, that when they arrive in the West-Indies, the markets may have been glutted, or such a number of ships may be there at the same time; that they must either beat about to the different islands, and lose more of them by sickness, or sell them lower
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than the average rate, calculated at the beginning of the voyage.

A fourth is the length of the date, before the bills, in which they are paid for, become due.—These bills are drawn at twelve, eighteen, twenty-four, and thirty-six months after sight. They give time of course for many disagreeable circumstances to intervene. Add to this, that they are sometimes returned for want of payment, even when this period has elapsed.

This being the case, it is clear, that there are four circumstances, concomitant on this trade, that conspire to render it of all others the most *hazardous*. These have occasioned it to be justly distinguished by the appellation of a *lottery*. Upon this principle, most of its promoters have embarked in it; some to be rich on a sudden, others, on their last legs, to retrieve their affairs by one fortunate voyage. This is the only light, in which it is to be viewed with propriety; for they who embark in it are as much adventurers as those, who, to answer the same end, have recourse to the *games of chance*.

With respect to a quick return, which is the very life of commerce, no trade was ever so disadvantageous, as that in slaves. The average time of a voyage is one year. At the expiration of this period, the vessel returns. On inspecting the bills which are brought home, and which have been received for the slaves, it appears, that they are not payable, on an average, till two years after sight. The merchant, therefore, cannot enjoy the profits of his voyage till three years after he has sent his vessel to the coast.

In the interim he is called upon to pay for the goods, which he has shipped. In six months his bill for spirits is brought him, though, in one of our ports, it must be paid for on delivery. In fourteen he must account for his East-Indian assortments, and in eighteen for those of Manchester and Birmingham; so that he must pay for the whole of his cargo a year and an half before he can derive any benefit from his returns. This occasions him often to be so distressed, that the manufacturer is put off. A credit of six months longer is solicited. To hear the pitiful

pitiful tales he tells, and the wretched excuses he makes, on these occasions, is truly disgusting. This is surely not a trade for the manufacturers of Great Britain; and that I have been describing the real situation of things, is but too well known to those who have felt it.

With respect to the real profit of the trade, I might appeal to those particular ships, with an account of whose voyages I have been favoured. Two of them, after having made three voyages each, which took up the space of five years, left their owners in debt, and obliged them to relinquish the trade. Another cleared the sum of four thousand pounds; but the same ship, in her next voyage, lost more than she had gained in the preceding. Another gained fifty per cent. but her success was undone by a second, which went out at the same time and in the same employ, and lost in the same proportion. These instances however, being few, I shall lay no stress upon them, but recur to general facts.

The great African company, which was vested with extraordinary powers, and which had every opportunity of feeling the emoluments of the trade, *failed twice*.

From the year 1763 to the year 1772 the London merchants avoided all kind of connection with those of Liverpool in this trade, from a conviction that, during that time, it had not been prosecuted but with loss.

The same caution continued till the year 1778; for within that small space of time, comprizing only the term of six years, the slave merchants there failed for the sum of *seven hundred and ten thousand pounds*, and the consequent bankruptcies were many.

During the American war, while the price of a slave was as low as seven pounds on the coast, and as high, on an average, as forty-five in the colonies, the adventurer, who escaped the ships of the enemy, made his fortune. But since the peace, the trade has returned to its former state; and it is considered as a fact, at the ports where it is carried on, that it is a *losing* trade at the present day: that is, if the disbursements and returns of all the vessels, that go out in one year, were to be consolidated on their arrival home, and compared, the former would be greater than

than the latter, and there would of course be a deficiency, or balance against the sum total of the adventurers in this trade.

But it will be said, if it be an *unprofitable* trade, why do people embark in it, or how does it happen, that many can be pointed out, who have made their fortunes there?

I reply, that the slave trade is a *lottery*, as I observed before, and that upon this principle the phenomenon may be satisfactorily explained.

It is evident first, that if a person were to become the proprietor of all the tickets in the wheel, the balance would be greatly against him. So also, were he to be the proprietor of all the ships in the slave trade, he would experience a considerable loss, as his disbursements would be then greater than his returns.

It is clear also, that there are many valuable prizes in the lottery, but more blanks. So it is with this trade. A few merchants have made their fortunes, but more have been losers by it. A few will still continue to make them, but many will be ruined.

But how come they to engage in it? I reply, why do people engage in the *games of chance*? In short, in no other light can the slave trade be viewed, than in that described: and, the things compared being both of the same kind, any difficulty that occurs in the one, may be solved by referring it to the other.

S E C T I O N II.

Having taken a general view of the value of the slave trade, by referring it to the three characteristics, which may be called a standard for commercial estimation, I shall put the commerce in the productions of the coast under the same trial.

It is clear, in the first place, that this commerce would not be equally hazardous with the former; rice, indigo, tobacco, spices, and other productions of Africa not being *perishable* commodities, like slaves.

In the second place, the merchant would receive his returns in five months, instead of three years, from the sailing

sailing of his vessel; and he would be able to turn them into specie before he had advanced a shilling to, or had had a demand from, the manufacturer whom he had employed. Nor would the latter be less benefited by the change, as no longer credit would be necessary, than that of eight months. Thus a quick circulation of money would take place, and the countenance, instead of exhibiting marks of uneasiness and distress, would be cheered with joy.

In the third place, the merchant in this trade would set out with two advantages over the merchant in the other. His insurance would be considerably less, and, requiring from the manufacturer a credit only of eight months, he would save five per cent. on all the goods which he shipped; or in other words, on account of the discount allowed him, he would carry the same quantity of goods for *ninety-five* pounds to the same coast, which the slave merchant cannot carry, in the present situation of things, but for an *hundred*.

As to the real profit which he would have on the articles brought home, some hints have been given in the preceding chapter. For bringing them to a market, where, those of the same kind, which come, are chargeable with a double freightage, commission, and the labour of slaves, his profits must be immense.

If the comparison is to be extended farther, I may add, that while the vessel of the slave merchant is performing one voyage, that of the other would perform two: so that if the slave trade were highly profitable, and one voyage in that line were twice more advantageous than one in the other, they would be reduced to an equality by this circumstance alone.

If then it appears, by referring the two trades to the same standard, that the trade in the natural productions of the country would be more valuable to individuals, (and its benefits more extensively felt) than the trade in slaves, an additional argument presents itself against the *policy* of the latter, since it is not only hazardous, slow in its returns, and in the aggregate unprofitable, but hinders the introduction of one, which would be attended with the *opposite effects*.

C H A P. III.

C H A P. III.

Before I proceed, I must pause for a little time, to take notice of an argument, which may have already suggested itself to the reader, and which, if it does not meet with a replication here, may be considered as rendering the whole of my former observations of no effect.

It is said, and it is strongly insisted upon by the advocates for the trade in slaves, that it is *politick*, because it engrosses the attention of the Africans, and hinders them from cultivating such of the productions of their own soil, as would interfere with those of *our own colonies*.

Now, if this would actually be the case, if the productions of Africa, mentioned in the first chapter, would clash with those of our kindred states, it would be highly improper, in the eye of the *politician*, to introduce the other trade, however valuable it might appear. I say *in the eye of the politician*, because his argument with the *moralist* is exactly this:—"I have a field sown with a particular grain, which yields me some advantages.—Another person has unfortunately the same kind of grain in his possession. If *he* sows it, his productions will clash with mine. I must therefore procure him to be kidnapped, or I must excite dissensions in his family, that will keep him engaged, or send him out of the way."

However, as it is termed a good political argument, and as it might tend to set aside the observations made in the preceding chapters, I feel myself called upon to reply to it in the present place.

With respect to the woods of Africa, it is probable that the article of mahogany, if imported from that quarter, would clash in some measure with that which would be brought from the Bay of Honduras. When I have allowed this, I may take upon me to say, that there is no other article from the coast, which would interfere with those produced in our own colonies.

It is certain that those for dying, and most of those for cabinet and other work, would not be liable to the objection, because there are no woods, as yet discovered
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on the face of the globe, that are of the same properties or kind.

The drugs, which we procure at present, are imported from the following places, viz. the British East Indies, Turkey, the Brazils through the medium of Portugal, and South America, through that of Spain.

It is unnecessary to make any farther statement than this, as there are three places out of four, from whence we derive them, that are *foreign*.

The next article of the new commerce would be that of Spices. All these are at present monopolized by the Dutch.

The tobacco which we import, is principally obtained from two places, Virginia and Maryland. These, by the late revolution, are *foreign* states. A small quantity is, however, cultivated in the British West Indian islands, but this is generally for plantation use, and if we except a few hogheads brought to us from St. Vincents, it may be said that this article, if produced in Africa, would not at all interfere with the productions of our present colonies.

With respect to rice a few words will be sufficient. It is brought to us from Carolina and Georgia, and in such a proportion, that ninety-nine parts in an hundred come to us from those states.

The indigo, which is imported into this country, is procured from the British East Indies, the British West Indies, Carolina, and Georgia, the French West Indies by the way of France, the Brazils by the way of Portugal, and South America by the way of Spain. The quantity annually imported from them all is about 1,350,000 pounds, of which about 1000,000 or more than five-sevenths are the produce of *foreign* states.

The cotton, which we have obtained for some time, has been cultivated in the British and French West Indies, the Dutch East Indian settlements, Turkey, and the Brazils. The whole quantity imported in the year 1786, was 20,000,000 pounds. That from the British colonies 5,157,698. So that we are under the necessity of procuring 14,842,302 pounds, or nearly three-fourths annually from *foreigners*.

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This statement, which is as accurate as any that can be obtained, shews to us the fallacy of the argument; and that we are so far from being likely to interfere with the colonists of our own, as in fact to give a blow to those of our *rival* states. Indeed, the argument is of an early date, and first made its appearance while America was our own. It was certain, at that period, that by keeping the Africans engaged in the trade in slaves, we hindered them from producing such of their own commodities, as would have greatly interfered with those of our *then* colonies. The inconsiderate, however, who have not attended to the late revolution there, have been bold enough to retain it, though nothing is more certain than that (the Americans being now aliens, and other circumstances being taken into consideration) it becomes a matter of policy to have them from another quarter.

Indeed, among the various events, that seem for some time to have been hastening on, and working together for the abolition of the slave trade, none appears to be of greater importance in this respect than the revolution before mentioned. As long as America was our own, there was no chance that a minister would have attended to the groans of the sons and daughters of Africa, however he might have felt for their distress. From the same spot, which was thus once the means of creating an insuperable impediment to the relief of these unfortunate people, our affection, by a wonderful concatenation of events, has been taken off, and a prospect has been presented to our view, which shews it to be *policy* to remove their pain.

C H A P. IV.

S E C T I O N I. ,

Having now provided against an obstacle which might have been thrown into my way, I shall proceed.

In the first and second chapters I considered the trade in *slaves* in an abstracted light, that I might balance it both *nationally* and *individually*, against that in the productions of the coast, as well as answer certain arguments usually

usually advanced in its defence. But as this trade has some *appendages*, and as these appendages are said to be of the highest importance to the state, I should be an unjust arbiter of the case, if I did not take them into consideration.

The advocates for the slave trade earnestly contend, that it is a *nursery for our seamen*. Upon no one argument have they declaimed with greater exultation than upon this; well knowing that our seamen are the pillars of the state, and that every trade, which conduces to rear and support them, it must be highly politic to continue, and highly dangerous to suppress.

Before I enter into the important argument advanced, it will be necessary to give the reader a history of the seamen employed in this trade; not only because such an history ought to be presented to his view, but because it will enable him to judge of the truth of certain positions, to be mentioned in a future chapter.

To begin: The wages, which able seamen receive in this trade, are from thirty to forty shillings per month. They have also two months advance-money, and their employers do not stand upon character.

In other trades they receive from thirty to thirty-five shillings per month, have but one month's advance-money, and will seldom, like other servants, be taken but with a character from their former masters.

The first idea, that must suggest itself to the reader from this comparative view, will be this, that it must be a difficult matter to procure seamen for this trade, or such extraordinary temptations would not be held out to them to embark. This is literally the fact: for these are as certain criterions of the difficulty which I intended should be surmised, as the price of insurance is of the hazard of a voyage, or as any other established marks of discrimination in any other case.

The difficulty of procuring seamen for the slave trade is well known at the ports where it is carried on, though the advocates for it have asserted the contrary to those, whom they knew to have had no opportunity of inquiring into the fact.

At one port in particular they have gone so far as to advance, that they have as many offers for making up the complements of their ships as they can accept. But they conceal the *time* and *occasion* of these proffered services. When the ships from Greenland and the West-Indies arrive and discharge their crews, the former of which put twelve hundred seamen adrift nearly at the same time, the slave vessels, then in port, find but little difficulty in procuring hands. But what inference can be drawn from hence? Not surely a partiality for the trade, but that many are thrown out of employ, whom necessity compels to embark.

On the other hand, when the same ships are refitting in the spring of the year, the matter is totally reversed. The slave-merchant is in the greatest distress for a crew. He offers even three months advance-money; but this has but little weight; and few seamen would ever voluntarily embark with him on any terms, so long as a ship of any other description was fitting out, and was in want of hands.

This is the true criterion, by which a judgment is to be formed in the present case, and if added to the three circumstances before mentioned, which are established rules of commercial regulation, will prove an insuperable argument against the assertions usually advanced by the patrons of this trade.

The seamen then, now under consideration, except at the time specified, are obtained in the following ways:

It has been customary to allure them into the service under the promise of making them mates. When they come on board, they act as officers of the ship; but soon after they have been at sea, they are degraded on a pretended charge of neglect. By these insidious means several foremast men have been annually obtained for the voyage.

But the great bulk of them are procured thus. There are certain landlords, who, allured by the high wages given them in this trade, the advance-money of two months, and the promises of the merchant, open houses for their reception. These, having a general knowledge

knowledge of the ships and seamen in the port, and being always on the look out, intice such as are more unwary or in greater distress than the rest into their houses. They entertain them with musick and dancing, and keep them in an intoxicated state for some time. In the interim the slave merchant comes, and makes his application. The unfortunate men are singled out; are perhaps taken from a dance. Their bill is immediately brought them. They are *said* to be more in debt, than even two months advance-money will discharge. They have therefore an offer made them, a *slave-vessel—or a goal*.

The former being accepted, the landlord, besides a gratuity, receives a promissory note for the sum equal to their advance-money from the merchant, and, like slaves, delivers them to the vessel.

Thus put on board, and sensible of the mean and ungenerous advantages that have been taken of their unwaryness and necessity, their * dislike to the service is only heightened, and they do not fail to exhibit proofs of it in the following manner.

In a certain month of the last year, four slave vessels were waiting for their men. The first, in consequence of the exertions before mentioned, had received a certain number; but they no sooner found an opportunity of escaping, than all of them left her, and on the same day.

In the second were seven, that had been procured in the same manner. These, soon afterwards, in spite of all opposition, forced themselves into the boat, and came on shore.

The third had scarcely completed her complement, when twenty-five of the people had left her at once, and twenty followed them on the next day.

By this time the first had again completed her crew: but so fearful was the merchant that these also would make

* I do not mean any dislike to the trade, because they consider it to be iniquitous, but because the cruel treatment of seamen in this trade is notorious, of which the reader will see some specimens hereafter. I have known a landlord, who opened his house for the reception of West India seamen, on an application from a slave merchant for men, refuse him solely from the motive that he should affront all who that lodged with him, were he barely to propose it to their consideration.

their escape, that the ship was immediately hurried to sea, though the weather was much against her. How they bore so sudden and so abrupt a departure, I cannot positively affirm; but, if the pilot is to be credited, there was nothing but dissatisfaction and murmur on board, while he was taking them out of the channel.

From the fourth two of the crew, seeing no other opportunity of getting away, leapt overboard in the night, though the ship was at that time more than a mile from the shore.

It is unnecessary to make any comments upon these instances. I shall therefore only add, that, except in this trade, they seldom or ever happen, and that seamen *offer* their services, in other trades.

S E C T I O N II.

While the crew are collecting in the manner above described, the articles of agreement are prepared. These articles state the nature and circumstances of the engagements of the seamen on board the vessel, and are to be signed by them before their departure from the native shore.

Some of these articles are too iniquitous to be omitted, I shall therefore give the reader an extract of one of them in my possession.

The first clause is, "That the crew shall conform and demean themselves in every respect according to the late act of parliament for the better regulation of seamen in his *Majesty's* service." This artful substitution of the word *Majesty's* for *Merchant's*, when subscribed to, gives the officers, in their own opinion, a power of inflicting severe punishment upon their men, and of gratifying their savage disposition.

The second is, "That one half of their wages is to be paid them in the West Indies or America, in the currency or proclamation money there." This clause is equally artful with the former; for though the merchant holds out to them the bait of *greater* wages nominally, he gives them intrinsically *less* than in other trades.

In

In the third it is stipulated, "that if they should die upon the coast, their executors shall receive the wages due to them at that time, in the current money of the place, at which the ship disposes of her slaves."

The fourth is, "That if they shall commence any action either at common law or at a court of admiralty, either on account of any thing in these presents contained, or on account of any other matter whatsoever that may happen during the voyage, without first referring it to the arbitration of the officers or owners within twenty days after their arrival at the port of discharge, they shall forfeit fifty pounds."

This, added to the first clause, arms the officers completely, and gives them scope, as they imagine, to practise any barbarities, which they may please to inflict upon their crew.

These articles being prepared for their signature, they are called up. This is generally done when the ship is weighing her anchor, or at some time when they are about to be busily employed. A necessity for expedition is pleaded: and they sign without ever seeing, or being permitted to see, the nature of the engagements which they are making. The articles are folded up in a curious manner for this purpose; and some, who have been more wary than the rest, and have persisted in the resolution of seeing, before they signed them, have been known to be put on shore.

If I am to shew the iniquity of these measures in a stronger light, it must be by comparing them with the practice in other trades.

The articles, now the objects of comparison, are * *printed*. They are either read, or left open to the inspection of the seamen before they sign. The crews, that embark to the *very same coast* for wood, know nothing of current money, nor of the clauses before mentioned. The West-India seamen, who meet at the same port with those in the slave-vessels, and where currency is in force, are not obliged to take the half of their wages there. In short,

* I must do justice to some of the merchants of Liverpool, who make use of printed articles, and omit the first and fourth clauses.

whether we view the arts and practices in this trade, either independently of themselves, or by comparison, they equally excite our detestation and disgust.

S E C T I O N III.

The articles of agreement being signed, they proceed to sea. From the port of Bristol, as soon as they have passed the Island of Lundy, and from the port of Liverpool, as soon as they have cleared the Black Rock, the officers generally order an instrument to be made, called a *cat*, which is alleged to be prepared for the punishment of the slaves. The handle of it is a rope of three inches and a half in circumference, and it has nine tails attached to it of knotted cord. This instrument cannot legally be used on board any other but one of his Majesty's ships, and in other trades, except the *East Indian*, is unknown.

From this period till their arrival upon the coast, they begin to use it upon the seamen, though at first with moderation, or only so as to prepare the way for the severities that are to follow. In a certain time, however, they apply it without reserve. But here a tragedy commences, of which the reader can have no conception, but which however must be submitted to his view.

I am sensible, that if I were to talk in general terms of the cruelties exercised upon the seamen in this trade, I should have but little attention paid to my narration by the publick, nor would they have that idea of them, which it is the duty of every person, acquainted with the facts, to communicate. I shall therefore wave all general assertions, and confine myself for the present to the occurrences in one ship.

A MUSTER

* A MUSTER ROLL for the Ship ———, from Africa
and the West-Indies.

| Men's names. | When and where entered into pay. | When and where dis- charged, killed, dead, deserted, &c. | Time each man served. |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| 1. — | — | — | — |
| 2. — | — | — | — |
| 3. — | — | — | — |
| 4. — | — | — | — |
| 5. — | — | — | — |
| 6. — | — | — | — |
| 7. — | — | — | — |
| 8. — | — | — | — |
| 9. — | — | — | — |
| 10. — | — | — | — |
| 11. — | — | — | — |
| 12. — | — | — | — |
| 13. — | — | — | — |
| 14. — | — | — | — |
| 15. — | — | — | — |
| 16. — | — | — | — |
| 17. — | — | — | — |
| 18. — | — | — | — |
| 19. — | — | — | — |
| 20. — | — | — | — |
| 21. — | — | — | — |
| 22. — | — | — | — |
| 23. — | — | — | — |
| 24. — | — | — | — |
| 25, &c. &c. | — | — | — |

* The three contained in the last bracket, do not stand as in the original muster roll, but are put together for the sake of elucidating the case.

The

The captain of this vessel began, as usual, to practise his barbarities a little before his arrival upon the coast. He took the opportunity of beating his crew repeatedly, and for imaginary faults. He had also on board a large dog, which he was accustomed to set upon the men for his diversion; at the same time swearing, that if any of the crew should attempt to take off the dog on any such occasion, he would shoot him for the attempt.

The treatment, which was thus begun, was continued upon the coast; and in such a licentious degree, as to become insupportable, and to alarm the seamen for the safety of their lives.

The eleven contained in the first bracket having been cruelly used, and seeing no hopes of a termination to their sufferings so long as they staid there, came to the resolution of deserting; chusing rather to trust to an inhospitable climate, and an uncivilized people upon the shore, than to stay on board their own vessel. They accordingly cut their way through the netting in the night. They seized the long boat, erected an oar for a mast, and a hammock for a sail; and, thus provided, they took their final departure from the ship.

It was but a short time before they dropped down the river, where the vessel lay. They then coasted along to make for a certain place, but were driven beyond it before they could get to land. To cut their story short: Eight of them, after experiencing many hardships; died. The other three were taken in by a vessel bound to the colonies with slaves. One of them died on the middle passage. The remaining two, in process of time, came home, but in so weak and impaired a state, that their recovery was long doubtful; for one had additionally to struggle with two large holes in his shoulder, which the dog, before mentioned, had torn at the instigation of his master.

This was the first effect of the barbarous usage on board the vessel, whose muster roll has been cited. I shall now continue my account.

The three, inclosed in the next bracket, were a part of the complement of a slave vessel, which had upset upon the coast, and who had escaped to this ship. They had been

been but a short time on board, before they experienced the same treatment as the rest of the crew.

The first of them was used in the following manner. In lowering down the awning one evening, the captain swore that he had suffered it to touch a boat, which he had amused himself in painting the same day; though no mark was visible, by which it could be traced that the awning had ever touched at all. For this imaginary fault he knocked him down, and then jumped upon his breast. He afterwards beat him in a most inhuman manner with a rope three inches and a half in circumference. The poor man, in consequence of this treatment, became ill, and complained to the surgeon and surgeon's mate of the pain which he then felt. The captain, however, happened to overhear his complaint, when he immediately ordered him to go forward, or he would repeat his former treatment, commanding the surgeon's mate, at the same time, not to administer to him any relief, under the penalty of being served in the same manner.

The surgeon, however, and his mate, privately visited the sick man in the night, by means of a dark lanthorn, and gave him every assistance in their power. They found several contusions on his neck, back, breast, and arms, which were so bad as to occasion him to spit blood, and to void the same by stool. This afterwards turned into a dysentery or flux, and on the seventh of the month of _____ the unfortunate man died.

It may not be amiss to add, that the dying man repeatedly thanked the surgeon for his tenderness and care, and that he repeatedly told him, that the captain had been the occasion of his death, generally adding, at the same time, that "he could not punish him, but that God would."

The other two were also treated in an unmerciful manner. One of them, on his arrival in the West Indies, died. The other had the good fortune to get to his native home.

The first of the two, contained in the third bracket, was the surgeon's mate of the vessel. On a certain day, being on shore with some sick slaves, he was beaten so unmercifully by the captain, as to be taken up insensible. The brute, not satisfied with this, pushed the stick of his umbrella

umbrella against his belly as he was lying upon the ground, and with such force, as to cause a most violent pain for some days: the only reason alledged for this treatment was, that four slaves had died of the flux the preceding night.

On the sixteenth day of the next month, he vented his fury again on the same person, and with as little cause; for coming out of his cabin, and finding a girl slave dead, whose death had not been reported to him before dinner, he immediately seized him, and knocked him down. He then jumped upon his breast. He afterwards beat him in a cruel manner with the but end of the cat, which I mentioned before to be a rope of three inches and a half in circumference, so that on the next day his head was found to be much swelled, and several contusions on his neck, back, and arms.

He was also beaten in a barbarous manner on the fourteenth and eighteenth days of the same month, and for no other reason than because the captain was in a passion with others.

The second person, and whose case is now to be considered, was knocked down two or three times in a day, without any just cause. At one time in particular, when the captain came upon deck, and found that the people, who were then washing the decks, had not moved the hen-coops as before, he immediately seized this person who was standing by, and having felled him down on the floor, stamped upon his body as he was lying there. Then seizing him, with an intention, as he swore, of throwing him overboard, he dragged him to the stern of the vessel. The unhappy man, to save himself, caught hold of the stern rails, by which he held fast till he was relieved by two of the ship's crew. In consequence of this treatment, he had several contusions on his breast, back, and other parts of his body, and also a black eye, with a swelled face, which deprived him of the sight of one of his eyes for about a fortnight.

At another time, when the ship arrived in the West-Indies, he was beaten, without the commission of a fault, in an inhuman manner. The captain struck him here so severely over his face, as to occasion his mouth to bleed for

for some time. He kicked him afterwards over his bowels, and with such violence, as to occasion him to fall down, when he jumped upon his breast as before, and otherwise cruelly treated him. The unfortunate victim, when he went on shore, complained to the magistrate of the place, to whom the vessel being consigned, he received no other satisfaction than his discharge; though he carried with him his shirt, stained with the blood which had then issued from his wounds. He was accompanied, on his application to this magistrate, by the person mentioned before him, who preferred his complaint likewise, and obtained—*equal redress*.

It would be a tedious and a painful task to describe the treatment which every individual received on board this vessel. I shall therefore submit to the reader but three more cases for his perusal.

The first in the fourth bracket was a very sensible old seaman, and formerly in his Majesty's service. He had had some words on the fore-castle with an officer, on account of complaining that he had no water to drink. The officer told the captain of the seaman's behaviour, and of his insolence in complaining. The latter instantly seized him, and beat out several of his teeth with his fist. He then ordered a pump-bolt to be put into his mouth, which was confined there by means of some rope-yarn tied behind his head. The poor old man was almost choaked, being unable to spit out the great quantity of blood which was then running down and collecting in his throat. He was then tied for two hours to the rail of the quarter deck, as he had previously declared his intention of leaping overboard, to avoid the farther persecution of his oppressor. When the two hours were expired, he was ordered under the half deck, tied to the grating companion of the steerage, and kept there all night with a sentinel over him. In about a month afterwards he was seized with a fever, and died.

The second, a lad of about seventeen years of age, was repeatedly knocked and kicked about, and otherwise cruelly treated by the same person for imaginary faults. The said lad had received from one of the other officers a wound in his toe. The captain was so far from favouring him in
this

this situation, that he endeavoured to distress him the more, and therefore compelled him to act as a centinel over the slaves; an office, which requires much walking about. This cruel usage soon produced a fever; nor did he ever feel for his situation at this time, for he obliged him to sit on the gratings during his illness, as a centinel over the room of the women slaves.

Overpowered now by illness and fatigue, he fell asleep on the gratings. The captain coming on the quarter deck at the same time, and finding him in the situation described, began, with oaths and imprecations, to beat him in an unmerciful manner. The poor lad, kicked at length from the gratings, and terribly bruised besides, crawled with much difficulty to the surgeon's mate. He there complained, in the anguish of his heart, of the bitter treatment he had received. He then solicited a little of the barley water, which is usually kept for the slaves; but while he was drinking it, he fell down at the feet of the surgeon's mate, and expired.

The third, and last whom I shall mention, was a black seaman, who had shipped himself in England as cook of the above vessel. The captain seems to have singled out this unfortunate man, as an object in which all his different modes of persecution were to centre. He knocked him down almost daily. He flogged him repeatedly on his naked back with his own hands, for so much pleasure did he receive from the exercise of cruelty and oppression, that he became the executioner on these occasions. He put a large chain about his neck, at the end of which was fastened a log of wood. In this chain he compelled him to do his duty as cook of the vessel, beating him severely in the interim, and kicking him about for his diversion.

At one time he ordered him to be tied up for no fault whatever, and he flogged him in such an unmerciful manner, that it was apprehended his arm would mortify, and nothing but the skill and assiduity of the surgeon saved it at last.

At another time he was ordered by the captain into his cabin. The pretence was this, that he had not roasted the yams properly, (which is a luncheon at twelve o'clock). As soon as he entered the cabin door, the inhuman wretch
for

for his diversion darted a knife and fork at him. The poor man fled in consternation from the cabin. The captain pursued him, and, to complete his cruelty, set his dog upon him as usual. The animal immediately obeyed, tore off his frock, and bit him in several places. I must add, that it was almost the daily practice of this barbarian to send for the above black seaman into his cabin, and to divert himself with darting at him the instruments before mentioned, whenever he could get, what he termed, a *fair mark*.

At another time he darted at him an instrument which was commonly used for striking fish. It consisted of a large thick stick, with a quantity of lead at one end of it, and three or four prongs or javelins at the other. This instrument was thrown at him with great force, and, unless he had fortunately stooped, he must have been killed, as it went just over his head, and stuck into the boards of the barricado of the vessel. The breaking of a plate was the grand crime that had been imputed to him on this occasion.

At another time he was flogged as before, and so severely, that he was cut from the neck to the small of the back in a shocking manner. When the operation was over, the captain called for a bucket, in which he mixed pepper and salt water, and then anointed his back, with a view to increase his pain. In short, so barbarous was his conduct to this poor fellow, that he became insensible at last, and, full of scars, and unable to walk upright, he frequently crawled in his chain, like a dog, upon all fours; the captain, by his ill usage, having reduced him both in form and mind to a level with the brute creation.

These are some of the instances of cruelty, that were practised on the seamen of this vessel. I find it impossible, for want of time, to insert them all. I shall therefore close my account here, and with this observation, that out of a crew, consisting of fifty-one persons, there were only *three* that escaped the barbarity of this monster in human shape.

The reader will probably think, from the dismal history now offered to his perusal, that I have at least singled out a ship, where the treatment was more unfavourable than
in

in any other in the same line. But I positively deny any charge that may be brought against me in this particular. I can specify instances of deliberate barbarity exercised on the bodies of British seamen in this trade, that *exceed* any I have yet described; and I assert further, that out of the captains of twenty ships taken promiscuously in it, I cannot find, upon a minute investigation, more than three, whatever may be their appearance at home, that are men of common humanity on their respective voyages.

To these three individuals then, who, trusted with unlimited power, surrounded by bad example, and placed on the brink of vice from the very nature of the trade, to these I say, who, in this situation have swerved from the common practice, I take this opportunity of paying that just tribute, which their behaviour deserves; but, I presume, that they will derive more pleasure from the peace and satisfaction in their own breasts, than from any public commendation.

S E C T I O N IV.

Before I investigate the argument adduced in the first section, that the *slave trade is a nursery for our seamen*, I shall answer two questions which may be started here.

The first may be delivered in the following terms. "Are not the same cruelties practised in other trades?"—I make the following reply.

A certain person, totally unconnected with the law, had no less than sixty-three applications made to him in three months, to obtain redress for such seamen, as had experienced the fury of the officers of their respective ships. Upon examination of their different cases, it appeared, that one of them had been cruelly treated on board a West-Indiaman, and that another had been knocked down and severely bruised on board an Irish trader. The remaining *sixty-one* were victims to the tyranny of the officers before described.

The first case, that came to his knowledge, was that of an unfortunate person, who had been landed from a slave-vessel in a sickly state but the preceding day. He had been repeatedly knocked down with the but-end of the cat.

cat. His life had been rendered so uncomfortable, that he had made three efforts to leap overboard, and destroy it. When he was taken up the last time, he had just been saved from the jaws of a shark that had been making after him. The unfortunate man had been also repeatedly chained to the deck of the ship, and in that situation had been insulted and beaten by his oppressor. When the application was made, he was in bed, and delirious. I shall observe here, that the rest of the same crew had been treated in a barbarous manner.

In the second, several of the party present came to inform of a murder that had been committed on the body of a British seaman upon the coast.

A third seaman had had his arm broken, without any provocation, by the butt end of a cat, an instrument before described.

A fourth being ordered to catch hold of the main-top-sail brace, and mistaking for it the main-top-bowling, had been knocked down with a handspike, and his arm broken in two places.

A fifth received such treatment as the reader will hardly believe; but I must inform him that this, as well as most of the other transactions, is upon oath, and that his persecutor has acknowledged it by the payment of a fine. — This unfortunate man, for a supposed want of care in a most trifling instance, was stripped naked, and corded down with his belly upon the deck. The barbarian and tyrant of the ship streaked his back, coolly and deliberately, with the end of a poker that had been heated for the purpose. I need not say that the poor man was in the greatest agonies on the occasion.

At another time, and on a like charge, while his wounds were yet fresh, a large lump of pitch was melted hot upon his back, and he was made to suffer the most excruciating pain.

A sixth was treated in the following manner, as collected from a deposition, made for the purpose of corroborating the fact.

A certain ship was lying in the month of ———, and in the river ———, on the coast of Africa, for slaves. The captain had been on shore, but on the evening came

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on

on board. On being informed of a circumstance, which a favourite had *devised* to have happened in his absence from the ship, he called for a certain seaman. Without any kind of inquiry, and with that impetuosity and despotism, which mark the principal agents in this trade, he immediately knocked him down, tore his shirt from his back with his own hands, and ordered him to be tied up for the purpose of flogging him.

When the poor innocent man was sufficiently secured, the captain took up the cat, which was a rope of three inches and an half in circumference, with nine tails at one end of it, and a double walled knot of nearly eight inches in circumference at the other. He beat him alternately with each end, and frequently on the back part of the head with the knot described. When his right hand was tired, he cursed it for being unable to perform its office compleatly, and had then recourse to his left.

Being too much wearied at length to continue the operation to his own mind, he applied to an officer of the ship, and ordered him to exert his strength, after the example given him, on the back of this innocent and unoffending man. The officer felt himself in a situation to be obliged to comply with his commands, but struck him only with the tail end of the instrument before described.

A second officer, being afterwards applied to for the same purpose, flogged him in the same manner, till the tails of the cat were worn into shreds, and it became no longer an instrument of pain.

By this time the captain had rested himself sufficiently to renew the task. He pulled off his jacket, tucked up the sleeves of his shirt, ordered another cat of the same kind to be brought, and used it in the same manner. To abbreviate this tale of woe, I shall say at once, that the punishment, from the time of its commencement to the time of its discontinuance, lasted for *three hours*.

The unhappy man, unable to sustain this accumulated persecution, had fainted before the operation was over; his head had hung on his shoulder; and, when he was taken down, he lay motionless on the deck.

The

The barbarian of the ship, not yet satished with his diabolical treatment of the unfortunate victim, ordered his hands and feet to be fastened together, his right hand to his left foot, and his left hand to his right. When this was done, a rope was made fast to the shackled limbs, and, like a cask, he was hoisted up from the deck. He was afterwards let down, by means of the same rope, into a boat, which was then lying by the side of the vessel. In this boat, and in this confined situation, he was left for the remainder of the night.

About five o'clock on the next morning, a seaman, having found his way into the boat, came up again, and reported that the unfortunate man was dead. In consequence of this, his body was brought up, and laid in the waist of the vessel. Another, who was his messmate, on coming up and seeing him there, had the curiosity to examine him. In feeling above his neck, three of his fingers found their way into a hole in the skull, which he, one of the deponents, said, had been made by the double walled knot of the cat before described, and which had been applied to him there in the most unmerciful manner. In withdrawing them from the wound, a great quantity of blood issued out, and came profusely upon the deck.

The tyrant of the ship, when he rose in the morning, and saw the body in its bleeding state, expressed no emotions of pity or concern, but, in a rough and imperious tone, only ordered it to be buried.

It may not be amiss to remark, that the unhappy victim had been in full health and vigour but the preceding night. He had been uncommonly cheerful, and had played on his flute just before the transaction happened, while the rest of the seamen danced. In the morning, however,—he was no more.

These are some additional instances of the behaviour of the captains of slave vessels to the unfortunate people, who compose their respective crews. Shocking as they are, they will hardly give the reader an adequate idea of the various cruelties exercised upon those, who embark in this trade. All on board is deliberate barbarity and op-

pression. An unfortunate sailor cannot speak or complain, but it is an offence against discipline, and an offence, never to be forgiven. While a British admiral, the highest character on the globe, does not think it below his dignity to be solicitous for the happiness of his people, or to attend to their complaints; the paltry captain of a slave vessel, the most despicable character upon earth, is the only human being who looks upon a British seaman as an inferior animal, and worthy of oppression and contempt.

The other instances are of a similar nature to the first four, but I should be as weary to communicate, as the reader to peruse them. If any person should consider those, that have been already mentioned, as sufficient to corroborate the cruel treatment so generally insisted upon in this trade, I shall neither have written nor have felt in vain.

The second question, that may be started, is the following:

“If this be the real situation of things, how happens it that the objects of such tyranny and oppression should not obtain redress, and that our courts of law should not have to decide upon more cases of this kind, than they have at present?”

I answer, because these objects are generally without friends and money, without which the injured will seek for justice but in vain; and because the peculiarity of their situation is an impediment to their endeavours for redress.

But to be more particular.—Where are these unfortunate people to appeal?

“In the West-Indies,” you will say, “where they first land.” But here one of the magistrates is perhaps the person to whom the vessel is consigned, and will not interfere. By another, when applied to, they are termed *deserters*, and unworthy either of credit or relief.

But let us follow them home to their destined port. How are they to obtain redress, or to whom also are they to make their application here?

You will say, “to a gentleman of the law.” But this gentleman of the law has many slave merchants for his clients, and refuses to be employed.

“Let

"Let them apply then to another." But this other refuses them from a different consideration. He reasons thus: "It will, perhaps, be a long while, on account of the forms of law, before the decision can be made. The witnesses must be forth-coming at an appointed time. But who are they? People, whose dependance is upon the *sea*; who look up to it for their support; who will not be a month on shore before their wages will be gone, and before they must get employment again. If they get into employ, they cannot appear. If they stay, who is to support them?"

This, and other considerations, peculiar to the situation and character of seamen, have hindered many from taking up their cause; and have deprived them of that redress, which the laws of every country ought to afford them as *men*; but particularly of this, which is indebted to their invincible perseverance and intrepidity for its present grandeur and support.

This account, though made as concise as possible, (for I had a volume of facts to offer on this head) will, I have no doubt, give the reader a yet more horrid notion of this execrable trade. It is begun in iniquity; it is continued in baseness: and whether we refer to the unhappy slaves, or the unfortunate seamen employed in it; in short, whether we view it at home or abroad, or consider the modes adopted in the practice of it, or its effects, it equally calls for the interposition of the legislature, being equally enormous and base.

C H A P. V.

S E C T I O N I.

I come now to the argument, upon which so great a stress has been laid, that *the slave trade is a nursery for our seamen*.

The truth of this argument I deny in the most explicit and unequivocal manner. I assert, on the other hand, that it is a *grave* for our seamen, and that it destroys more

in *one* year, than *all the other* trades of Great Britain, when put together, destroy in *two*.

To shew this in the clearest manner, I shall divide the loss, which the state experiences in her seamen by the prosecution of the slave trade, into *three* parts. The first will contain such as are actually on the dead list, while on pay, and in the service of their respective ships. This shall be immediately explained. The other two shall be each of them canvassed in a distinct section.

I am aware, that in attempting to ascertain the first to the satisfaction of the reader, I must avoid all general assertion, and produce many of those *particular facts*, which have induced me to speak with so much confidence on the subject. I shall therefore submit to his inspection an account of the loss sustained by the last eighty-eight vessels in this trade, that had returned to Liverpool from their respective voyages in the September of the year 1787. I give him so great a number for three reasons, first, because it includes all vessels both great and small; secondly, because it includes destinations to all parts of the coast; and thirdly, because it is from a number only, that any inference can be justly drawn.

| <i>Ships Names,</i> | <i>Number of Seamen * lost in each,</i> | | |
|---------------------|---|---|----|
| Sifters, | - | - | 3 |
| Hornet, | - | - | 15 |
| Molly, | - | - | 14 |
| Fair American, | - | - | 10 |
| I yon, | - | - | 15 |
| Will, | - | - | 17 |
| Telemachus, | - | - | 8 |
| Peggy, | - | - | 9 |
| Pedros Valley, | - | - | 3 |
| Doe, | - | - | 3 |
| Matty and Betty, | - | - | 3 |
| Gregson, | - | - | 12 |
| Bloom, | - | - | 5 |

* Under the term lost, is included those that died, or were killed, or were drowned. Neither the captains, nor any of those seamen that were taken in at the West Indies, are included in the account.

William,

Ships Names. *Number of Seamen lost in each.*

| | |
|----------------|----|
| William, | 8 |
| Brooks, | 9 |
| Vulture, | 5 |
| Enterprize, | 3 |
| Venus, | 11 |
| Mermaid, | 6 |
| Christopher, | 8 |
| Thomas, | 2 |
| Africa, | 2 |
| Little Joe, | 1 |
| President, | 8 |
| Mary Ann, | 13 |
| Madam Pookata, | 3 |
| Hinde, | 2 |
| Mary, | 6 |
| Brothers, | 4 |
| Chambers, | 7 |
| Vale, | 1 |
| John, | 17 |
| Benfon, | 3 |
| Mary, | 3 |
| Gascoyne, | 13 |
| Bud, | 5 |
| Essex, | 8 |
| Elliott, | 7 |
| King Pepple, | 5 |
| Juba, | 9 |
| Garland, | 13 |
| Mofsley Hill, | 8 |
| Mary, | 9 |
| Gato, | 10 |
| Darnal, | 10 |
| Tarleton, | 5 |
| Africa, | 19 |
| Quixote, | 4 |
| Hero, | 8 |
| Rose, | 12 |
| James, | 8 |

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Oronooko,

Ships Names. *Number of Seamen lost in each,*

| | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|------|
| Oronooko, | - | - | - | 6 |
| Blaydes | - | - | - | 17 |
| Kitty, | - | - | - | 5 |
| Tartar, | - | - | - | 15 |
| Golden Age, | - | - | - | 11 |
| Fancy, | - | - | - | 7 |
| Ally, | - | - | - | 4 |
| Mungo, | - | - | - | 2 |
| Jane, | - | - | - | 7 |
| George, | - | - | - | 5 |
| Hornet, | - | - | - | 13 |
| Sarah, | - | - | - | 0 |
| Venus, | - | - | - | 2 |
| Mary, | - | - | - | 0 |
| Mary, | - | - | - | 5 |
| Jemmy, | - | - | - | 2 |
| Lord Stanley, | - | - | - | 5 |
| Madam Pookata | - | - | - | 3 |
| Mercer, | - | - | - | 6 |
| Hannah, | - | - | - | 3 |
| Fanny, | - | - | - | 3 |
| Mary Ann, | - | - | - | 6 |
| Molsley-Hill, | - | - | - | 5 |
| Chambers, | - | - | - | 0 |
| Will, | - | - | - | 5 |
| Vulture, | - | - | - | 16 |
| Crescent, | - | - | - | 0 |
| Colonel, | - | - | - | 7 |
| Gregson, | - | - | - | 6 |
| Little Joe, | - | - | - | 4 |
| Favourite, | - | - | - | 15 |
| Peggy, | - | - | - | 3 |
| Maria, | - | - | - | 24 |
| Enterprize, | - | - | - | 5 |
| Heart of Oak, | - | - | - | 1 |
| Bloom, | - | - | - | 9 |
| Ingram, | - | - | - | 15 |
| Total lost | | | | 631 |
| Employed | | | | 3082 |

The

The reader will see, by casting his eye on the preceding list, *that the slave trade cannot possibly be a nursery for our seamen*, for it clearly appears from thence, that if we refer the estimate to the *number of ships*, every vessel, that sails from the port of Liverpool in this trade loses more than *seven* of her crew, and that if we refer it to the *number of seamen* employed, more than a *fifth* perish.

This has been the invariable proportion for the port of Liverpool for many years ;—and I should have stated it to the reader without the preceding list, but that I thought it would be more satisfactory for him to see at least a part of the foundation, on which it had been raised.

The other ports also have had, in consequence of the same kind of investigation, their different proportions of loss assigned them, which are so accurate, that if applied to any number of ships taken promiscuously, and exceeding twenty, they will be found to answer on almost every occasion. These, with the former, I shall now state without reserve,

First : Every vessel that sails from the port of Liverpool to the coast of Africa, loses on an average more than seven of her crew, or a fifth of the whole number employed.

Secondly : Every vessel from the port of Bristol loses on an average nearly nine, or almost a fourth of the whole crew.

Thirdly : Every vessel from the port of London loses more than eight, and between a fourth and a fifth of the whole complement of her men.

By these statements it will appear, that if we compound the loss at the different ports of this kingdom, which are used for the prosecution of the slave trade, every vessel may be said to lose more than *eight* of her crew ; and if we refer the loss to the number employed, *between a fourth and a fifth* may be said to perish. To these observations I shall only add, that in the year 1786, *eleven hundred and twenty-five* seamen will be found upon the *dead list*, in consequence of this execrable trade.

SECTION II.

SECTION II.

The *second* part of the loss, mentioned in the preceding section, is now to be considered. It will be found to contain such, as are annually dissipated in the *West-Indies* after their discharge from their respective ships; and of whom, from this period, the muster-rolls give no farther account.

Some of the slave vessels, which arrive in the *West-Indies*, have perhaps experienced but little mortality in their crews. It is clear, in this case, that many of the seamen on board become *supernumerary* for the remainder of the voyage.

Others again bring them in, in so weak and impaired a state, that they are considered as *incapable* of navigating the vessels home.

These circumstances therefore occasion many of them to be discharged there. The sick are sometimes forced on shore in the night previous to the departure of the vessel home, and are left to shift for themselves, though the very act of discharging them in the colonies, even in a reputable way, is contrary to law: while others are so tired of the voyage, so disgusted at the treatment which they have received, and so much in want of rest and comfort, that they chuse rather to forfeit the whole of their wages, and desert, than to return home in the same ship.

It appears then, that many of the seamen, for the reasons given, have left, or have been obliged to leave, their respective vessels, either on the arrival of these in the *West-Indies*, or before their departure home. It will be now proper to follow them, and to see their fate.

Some of these, as opportunity offers, make application to such ships, either employed in this or another line, as are returning to England, and procure a birth. But the demand being not equal to the employment of more than half of those who are set adrift, a considerable number are annually left behind. Among these then, the residue that are unemployed, is to be traced the second part of the loss, which I mentioned to have originated in the prosecution of the trade.

To

To attempt to ascertain it, (which I presume will be no difficult task) I shall confine myself to one particular year.

In the year 1786 were employed in the } 5000 Seamen.
Slave trade, in round numbers } —

Of this number came home with the vessels 2320

Upon the dead list were - - - 1130

Discharged in Africa, and not accounted } 80
for by other vessels } —

Discharged and deserted in the West- } 1470
Indies - - - - - } —

5000

Taken up in the place of those discharged } 610
or deserted - - - - - } —

It will be now no difficult matter to ascertain the point in question. It has been just stated, that *fourteen hundred and seventy* seamen were put adrift in the colonies in the year 1786, and that only *six hundred and ten* were taken up in their stead. It remains therefore only to inquire of whom this body consisted, that were thus taken up in the year 1786, as substitutes for those, who were set adrift within the same period.

* To shew that this trade is perfectly systematick and productive of the same effects, I shall subjoin the state of four or five lots of ships, taken promiscuously for the purpose.

Discharged or deserted in the West-Indies:

Taken up in their stead:

In 24 ships in the Slave-trade 334
In 24 others " 211
In 24 others " 208
In 24 others " 205
In 16 others " 155

1114

140

88

86

73

72

459

The reader will see from hence, that there is a continual disgorgement of seamen from these vessels into the islands, and not a drawback of one-half by the same.

Let

Let us suppose first, that these six hundred and ten substitutes were all of them *Guinea seamen*. Then it is clear, that each of the slave vessels, which arrived last in the colonies, must have taken up a part of those which the preceding had left behind; that those, who were thus taken up, must have been a part of the same that were discharged; and that *eight hundred and sixty* remain to be accounted for in that year.

Let us suppose secondly, that they were *West-India seamen*, who ran from their respective ships, and that none of the fourteen hundred and seventy were taken up by the slave vessels in the given time. Then it is clear, that the West-Indiamen must have wanted an equal number of hands to supply the places of those that had left them. For this supply set off an equal number taken from the fourteen hundred and seventy before mentioned. This will be only changing hands, and the balance will remain as before.

Let us suppose thirdly, (which is the real case) that they consisted of both, that is, that a part of the substitutes were taken from the West-Indiamen, and the remaining part from the slave vessels. Then it is equally evident, that the result will be the same. So that, in whatever point of view we consider the case, it will appear, that only six hundred and ten seamen out of the whole number deserting or discharged have yet found their way out of the colonies, and of course, that *eight hundred and sixty* yet remain to be accounted for in the expenditure of the year 1786.

This being the case, I must now inquire what became of the latter, for they compose a number too serious to be passed over, without a rigid investigation.

It will be said, that they came home in the West-Indiamen. But I reply, that the West-Indiamen have already received a sufficient number to replace those of their own seamen, who were taken up by the slave vessels in that year, and that the balance is still the same. If therefore any were wanted by the former vessels, it could be only to supply the places of such as died, or were lost on board them.

This

This loss, on a supposition that six hundred sail of vessels were employed in the West-Indies from Great Britain in the year 1786, was not more than that of *one hundred and sixty* seamen, so that *seven hundred* (admitting the loss to have been so supplied) must have been still left in the colonies.

It will be now said, that the remainder went into the King's service. Shall I reserve two hundred of them for this purpose, a much greater number than were ever wanted annually as recruits in the time of peace? What became of the rest, for *five hundred* still remain to be accounted for.

The truth is, that they were lost for ever to the state, and that this number will still continue to be *annually* lost, so long as the trade is prosecuted to its present extent.

In the following picture may be seen the fate of the unemployed remains of those, who are thus annually set adrift in the colonies.

Some of these, in an infirm and debilitated state of health, (the reasons of which will be given in a future chapter) and rather *shadows* in their appearance than *men*, are soon carried to the hospitals, and die there.

Others, to forget their sufferings, and to have a little relaxation after the hardships and severities they have experienced, indulge themselves on shore. They drink new rum. Their habit of body is unable to bear it, and they fall victims, I will not say to their intemperance, but to the nature of the trade, which has brought them first into a debilitated state, and has then put them adrift to effect their own cure. These are seen in the streets * dying daily in an *ulcerated* state, objects both of commiseration and horror. Their situation immediately points them out as the remains of the crew of a slave vessel: but they fall without pity, without friends, without a look but of contempt from the hardened multitude that passes by.

Others, without friends, and without money, wander about in the different islands, and beg from door to door, till overpowered by heat, hunger, and fatigue, they fall equally unpitied, and share the fate of their former friends.

* Particularly in Jamaica.

Others,

Others, upon seeing all these calamities, are additionally so hurt on account of the brutal severities exercised upon them, and the want of protection and redress, determine to embark for America, there to spend the remainder of their days: and so invincible has been the resolution of many of them in this respect, that, destitute of money, they have suffered themselves to die with hunger, sooner than embark in any ship that belonged to their own country.

In these different ways are many of the brave but unfortunate seamen, who are put adrift in the colonies from the vessels before described, lost *aditionally* to the state, and in such a proportion, that not less than *five hundred* annually, in the time of the * peace establishment, or about *four* to every vessel, may be added, as *lost in the West-Indies*, to those upon the dead list, that are martyrs to this inhuman trade.

S E C T I O N III.

I come now to the *third* part of the loss, which the state experiences. This may be traced in such of the seamen as, having left the colonies either in their own or in other ships, have returned *home*.

Some of these, and not an inconsiderable number, when we view them as seamen, go blind in consequence of the voyage, and become in future for ever dead as naval subjects to the state.

Others, worn out and landed from the ships in a weak and emaciated condition, are carried to the infirmaries, and die there.

Others, labouring under the scurvy, rheumatism, and a complication of disorders, contracted from the very nature of the voyage, become incurable. Their whole habit is so broken down and relaxed, that oedematous swellings are the consequence in their legs, and they are cut off from all chance or possibility of pursuing a naval life. Others, that have been maimed or ill treated, are in the same

* The peace establishment in this trade consists of about one hundred and thirty vessels.

situation.

situation. While others again, disgusted at the barbarous treatment exercised upon them, and perhaps in their first voyages, become disheartened, relinquish the sea, and betake themselves to those occupations which they left, or of which they have most knowledge.

These are the different ways in which the *third* part of the loss is occasioned; and if we include those who become blind, and die in the infirmaries, and are rendered by ill treatment and a complication of disorders incapable of pursuing the sea, and who relinquish it from disgust, it will be a very moderate statement to say, (at least as far as my inquiries have yet reached) that *three* naval subjects are *additionally* lost to the *state* by every vessel, even out of those who *return home*.

These observations being put together, and the whole loss, including those that were upon the dead list, and those that were lost in the colonies, and those that died and were rendered unserviceable at home, being estimated, it cannot be stated, that less than *fifteen* seamen in every vessel, or *nineteen hundred and fifty* out of the whole number employed, were lost to the service of this country by the prosecution of the slave trade in the year * 1786.

S E C T I O N IV.

Having now stated the *actual* loss, which the vessels experienced in this trade, I come to the *comparative*; for I have said that the slave trade was not only a *grave* for our seamen, but that it destroyed *more* in *one* year than *all the* other trades of Great Britain, when put together, destroy in *two*.

For this purpose, I shall exhibit the loss sustained in several trades, confining myself to a certain number of vessels taken promiscuously in each.

* The loss, stated in the year 1786, will be nearly applicable to that of the year 1787, or any other year of what may be called the peace establishment in this trade; for in any such years, nearly the same number will be found on the dead list; the same number discharged in the colonies; the same number taken up in their places; and the same number dead, and rendered unserviceable at home;—so systematick (as I observed in a former note) is this trade.

An

An Account of the LOSS sustained in Twenty-four
Slave Vessels from the Port of BRISTOL.

| <i>Ships Names.</i> | <i>Number of Seamen lost.</i> |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Africa | 7 |
| Pearl | 20 |
| Jupiter | 11 |
| Hector | 8 |
| Emilia | 8 |
| Constantine | 11 |
| Alfred | 6 |
| Jupiter | 14 |
| Sally | 7 |
| Wasp | 3 |
| Little Hornet | 6 |
| Royal Charlotte | 14 |
| Tryal | 6 |
| Emilia | 9 |
| Alexander | 9 |
| Little Pearl | 5 |
| Mermaid | 2 |
| Wasp | 6 |
| Brothers | 32 |
| Thomas | 8 |
| Emilia | 3 |
| Alert | 4 |
| Royal Charlotte | 2 |
| Alexander | 15 |
| | <hr/> 216 |

An

An Account of the LOSS sustained in Twenty-four
EAST-INDIAMEN.

| <i>Ships Names.</i> | <i>Number of Seamen lost.</i> |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Manship | 7 |
| William Pitt | 13 |
| Duke of Montrose | 10 |
| Earl Cornwallis | 4 |
| Phoenix | 23 |
| Northumberland | 6 |
| Ranger | 1 |
| Southampton | 8 |
| Chapman | 4 |
| Kent | 12 |
| Stormont | 9 |
| Royal Charlotte | 9 |
| Contractor | 5 |
| Bridgewater | 2 |
| Neptune | 6 |
| Vanfittart | 7 |
| Earl Talbot | 20 |
| Valentine | 8 |
| Lord North | 3 |
| Ganges | 13 |
| Sullivan | 7 |
| Carnatic | 2 |
| Pitt | 3 |
| Berrington | 19 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 201 |

E

An

An Account of the LOSS sustained in Twenty-four
WEST-INDIAMEN.

| <i>Ships Names.</i> | <i>Number of Seamen lost.</i> | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|---------|
| Good Hope | - | 0 |
| Exeter | - | 0 |
| Venus | - | 0 |
| Charles | - | 0 |
| Juno | - | 0 |
| Colin | - | 0 |
| Albion | - | 0 |
| Mercury | - | 0 |
| St. Thomas | - | 0 |
| Druid | - | 3 |
| Industry | - | 0 |
| Apollo | - | 0 |
| Saville | - | 0 |
| Fanny | - | 0 |
| Jarrett | - | 0 |
| Lord North | - | 0 |
| Triton | - | 1 |
| Fame | - | 0 |
| Union Island | - | 0 |
| Mercury | - | 0 |
| Generous Planter | - | 1 |
| Dispatch | - | 1 |
| Salter | - | 0 |
| Pilgrim | - | 0 |
| | | <hr/> 6 |

An

* An Account of the LOSS sustained in Twenty-four Vessels in the PETERSBURG Trade.

| <i>Ships Names.</i> | <i>Number of Seamen lost.</i> |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Exeter | 0 |
| Nancy | 0 |
| Three Sisters | 0 |
| Joseph | 0 |
| Exeter | 0 |
| Baltick Merchant | 0 |
| Three Sisters | 0 |
| Three Sisters | 0 |
| Polly | 0 |
| Sally | 0 |
| Three Sisters | 0 |
| Polly | 0 |
| Three Sisters | 0 |
| Monmouth | 0 |
| Baltick Merchant | 0 |
| Monmouth | 0 |
| Baltick Merchant | 1 |
| Monmouth | 0 |
| Sally | 0 |
| Baltick Merchant | 1 |
| Sally | 0 |
| Monmouth | 0 |
| Sally | 0 |
| Monmouth | 0 |

2

* The Petersburg trade, at Bristol, where I collected some of my papers, being small, I have been obliged to take the same ship for three or four voyages.

An Account of the LOSS sustained in Twenty-four
Vessels in the NEWFOUNDLAND Trade.

| <i>Ships Names.</i> | <i>Number of Seamen lost.</i> |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Surprise | 0 |
| Somerfet | 0 |
| Catherine | 0 |
| Jenny | 0 |
| Little Robert | 0 |
| Unity | 0 |
| Nancy | 1 |
| Bristol Packet | 0 |
| Friends | 0 |
| Ripley | 0 |
| Harbourgrace Packet | 0 |
| Active | 0 |
| Ann | 0 |
| Mermaid | 0 |
| Surprise | 1 |
| Brothers | 0 |
| Fly | 0 |
| Catherine | 0 |
| Betsey | 0 |
| Friendship | 0 |
| Jenny | 0 |
| Nancy | 0 |
| Sally | 0 |
| Nancy | 0 |

An Account of the LOSS sustained in Twenty-four
GREENLANDMEN.

| <i>Ships Names.</i> | <i>Number of Seamen lost.</i> |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| William and John | 0 |
| Lyon | 0 |
| Betty | 0 |
| Peggy | 0 |
| Lyon | 2 |
| Philippa | 0 |
| William | 0 |
| Sarah | 0 |
| Leviathan | 0 |
| Pilgrim | 0 |
| John | 0 |
| Grampus | 0 |
| Golden Lyon | 0 |
| Brilliant | 1 |
| James | 0 |
| Anfdell | 0 |
| Whale | 0 |
| Margaret | 1 |
| Peggy | 0 |
| Argus | 0 |
| Betty | 0 |
| Swan | 0 |
| Fisher | 1 |
| Seacome | 0 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 5 |

To recapitulate, the account will stand thus :

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| In twenty-four Slave vessels | 216 |
| ———— East-Indian | 201 |
| ———— West-Indian | 6 |
| ———— Greenland | 5 |
| ———— Petersburg | 2 |
| ———— Newfoundland | 2 |

But this statement, though it exhibits the loss sustained in an equal number of vessels in different trades, does not yet give us that just comparative view, which the case requires. Some of these were considerably longer on their voyage, and carried a much greater number of men than others. These two circumstances, therefore, are to be reduced to an equilibrium. We must put an equal number of hands into the different trades. We must make them serve for an equal time ; and the loss, which each would experience under these circumstances, will be the true comparative loss.

I will not trouble the reader to follow me through the process of these calculations. I shall therefore inform him immediately, that in raising the time and number in some, and reducing them in others, to a just equilibrium, the account will stand thus :

| | | |
|---|----|------|
| In 910 seamen employed in the Bristol slave-vessels | } | 200. |
| for one year, will be lost more than | | |
| In 910 ——— in East-Indiamen | 37 | } |
| In 910 ——— in West-Indiamen | 21 | |
| In 910 ——— in the Petersburg trade | 10 | |
| In 910 ——— in the Newfoundland trade | 10 | |
| In 910 ——— in the Greenland trade | 9 | |

Having

Having now furnished a comparative view of the loss sustained in some of the trades that are carried on by the subjects of this country, I will venture to assert, that if we except the slave trade, all the rest of them put together did not dissipate more than *nine hundred* seamen in the year 1786. In the same year were destroyed by the slave trade *nineteen hundred and fifty*. So that the truth of my former assertion, "that this iniquitous trade destroys *more, in one year, than all the other trades of Great Britain, when put together, destroy in two,*" will but too manifestly appear.

The account, which I have now given, including many particular facts, will, I doubt not, have sufficient weight with the disinterested British reader, to overturn the argument, which has never been insisted upon but in *general terms, that the slave trade is a nursery for our seamen*. The reverse, I apprehend, will strike him in a very forcible light; and, if I do not anticipate too hastily, cannot but be productive of pain. That every ship, so occupied and employed, should be attended with such a loss as has been specified, is a circumstance, so melancholy in itself, and so fatal in its consequences, that it must fill him with alarm and horror, and he will wait with painful anxiety for the suppression of a trade, which so manifestly tends to wound his country in its vital parts. In vain will its advocates plead with him, that the chain of commerce will be broken, or that a part of the mercantile fabric of the nation will be thrown down. Let them remember, that it has been raised at the expense of the pillars of the state; and *that no emolument whatever, which individuals can obtain from the trade, can ever be thought a sufficient compensation for so great and so national a loss*.

C H A P. VI.

I must now inquire, whether the trade in the natural productions of the country would be equally detrimental to the state; for it will immediately be alleged, that the vessels, in which it is to be conducted, must go to the *same coast*.

I shall answer this objection in the most explicit manner, by endeavouring to prove, that if the same ships and men were to go into the trade proposed, they would not experience an equal loss.

This I shall attempt to demonstrate by recurring to the causes of the loss described, and by shewing these causes to be chiefly peculiar to the trade in slaves, or such as would cease to exist, *were the trade abolished*.

The first will be found upon the coast.

On the windward coast a considerable part of the cargo of slaves is procured by open boats. These boats are continually beating about, and watching the signals made upon the shore. They proceed to the distance of twenty or thirty leagues, and are often absent for three weeks from the ship. During this time, they are exposed to the inclemency of the weather, night and day, which becomes frequently the occasion of their death. Some of these boats are upset, and the seamen lost.

Others go up the rivers, and are absent for an equal time. The days are excessively hot, and the dews are excessively cold and heavy. Those, who are sent upon this service, are considered as devoted. Some never return with the boats. The rest come on board, and often die.

This mortality is to be attributed to two causes; partly to the *uncertainty* of the trade, which makes the long and constant use of these boats so necessary; and partly to the *climate*.

In the trade proposed, no such *uncertainty* would be found. The seasons for the different crops, (not like the seasons for human flesh) would be periodical and regular. Store-houses would be built at convenient places. The natives

natives up the river would bring down their produce in their canoes. The use of open boats would in this respect be precluded, and one of the causes of the present loss would be removed.

With respect to the climate, it requires but little knowledge or experience to say, that it may be subjected to human art. Other countries, now civilized, were formerly inhospitable to strangers, but have become habitable by all. Such would be the case with the regions of Africa in the new intercourse pointed out. For if the country, which is now a forest, were cleared; if the lands were put into cultivation, if the swamps were drained, and such other events were to take place, as would be the certain effects of establishing the trade proposed, the cause of this mortality to strangers would gradually decrease, the dews would be moderated, the rains and tornadoes become less frequent and violent, and the climate be as healthy as any other in any region of the globe.

Other causes of the loss, which the state experiences in her seamen by the prosecution of the trade, will be found both upon the coast and on the middle passage.

The first of these may be traced in insurrections, in consequence of which several of them have lost their lives.

The second in the communication of those disorders, with which the slaves are attacked. Among these is principally the flux, which is contagious, and which several of the seamen, who are often obliged to be among them, cannot possibly escape.

The above two causes, it is evident, could have no existence in the trade proposed, as the commodities, which the vessels would then carry, could neither rise up against, nor spread an infection among their crews.

A third may be found in that barbarous and oppressive treatment, which has been described. This treatment occasions the death of some, and renders others incapable of pursuing the same line of life on their return home. This cause would immediately be removed, as it is peculiar, and wholly to be attributed to the *nature* of this execrable trade.

trade. It is a fact, that men have embarked in it, who have been considered as men of humanity, and that the same people in a little time have been totally altered, and distinguished by the appellation of brutes. Nor is the change wonderful. The unbounded power, which the captains of slave vessels possess, could be exercised but by few with propriety, and is in general too much for the human mind to bear, without degenerating into tyranny and oppression. The scenes too, which they must constantly be accustomed to behold, harden the heart, rob it of its finer feelings, and at length create a ferocity that, accompanied with the other effects, renders them rather monsters than men.

The fourth is to be traced in bad living. The crews of these vessels have not only to struggle with the disadvantages described, but additionally with those of hunger and thirst, which render them emaciated and weak, and conspire, with other causes, to pull them down, and to subdue them. They are in general *half starved*, and are often reduced to the necessity of begging their victuals of the slaves. The latter, with a generosity and commiseration, that must ever be the severest censure on their enslavers, convey to them privately through the gratings the solicited relief.

Water too, in a quantity sufficient to satisfy their thirst, is scarcely to be obtained. A gun-barrel is carried to the topmast head, and suspended there. The sailor, who wants to drink, is obliged to fetch it down. He then puts it into a cask of water, and applying his mouth to the muzzle, sucks the liquid up. When he has done with it, he carries it to its former place. Many, who are sick and infirm, go without their water, or suffer as long as they can, sooner than attempt to fetch the instrument for obtaining it in their feeble state.

This prohibition of a sufficient quantity of water and provisions, the want of which greatly impoverishes their blood, and renders them more susceptible of impression from the various causes of disease, is wholly to be ascribed to the nature of the trade: for the time which a vessel may stay upon the coast, or be upon the middle passage,

is

is so *uncertain*, and the number on board to be daily supported so *great*, that the officers are under the necessity of acting with the parsimony described.

The fifth originates in the following manner: When the slaves are brought on board, the seamen, to make room for them, are turned out of their apartments between the decks. During their stay in the rivers, a place of retreat is made for them, but this, on their departure from the coast, is obliged to be taken down. From this period they either sleep on the open deck, or in the tops of the vessel. In some vessels they are permitted to sleep in the boat, which is suspended under the booms, with a tarpawling over them usually full of holes. But in general they are left destitute of a covering, and are exposed through the whole of the middle passage to all the inclemency of the weather. If it rains, they must unavoidably be wet, and in that condition they must unavoidably continue, as they have no place of shelter, in which they can put their heads. From this bad lodging, and this continual exposure to colds and damps, and suddenly afterwards to a burning sun, fevers originate, which carry many of them off; and as to some of those who survive, such confirmed rheumatisms are the consequence, as to render them afterwards burthensome to themselves, and unserviceable to the state,

Nor is this the only effect, which this continual vicissitude from heat to extreme dampness and cold, has upon some of the surviving crew. Inflammatory fevers, as I observed before, necessarily attack them. These fevers affect the whole frame. The eye, from the tenderness and delicacy of its texture, and its susceptibility beyond that of any other organ, feels the inflammation most. This inflammation terminates either in dispersion or suppuration. In the first instance, the eyes are saved. In the latter, they are lost. Thus many of those who survive, though they afterwards regain their health, are rendered incapable, in consequence of the loss of their sight, of pursuing a naval life. This cause, as productive of the two different effects now mentioned, is to be found only in the trade in slaves,

The

The sixth, and last which I shall mention, is the great length of time in which they are made to live upon salt provisions without any intermission, indulgencies being seldom or ever given them, as in other trades. The reason of such a niggardly conduct in their employers is this, that the slave trade is so much more hazardous than the rest, that every pitiful saving must be made. These salt provisions that are equally administered to them in health or sickness, vitiate the juices. Every scar, that is accidentally raised upon their flesh, becomes an ulcer. These ulcers are hardly ever to be cured; and so affected have been the bones of many of them with these scorbutick disorders, that a probe has been put through them with ease; and so thin their blood, that it has discharged itself at the ulcerated places. In this unhappy state, many of them, as I have observed before, are discharged in the West Indies, and die there, while some of those, who are so fortunate to get home, become incurable.

It is clear, that if the trade proposed were established, this cause would be immediately removed. The whole length of the voyage would be only five months. Fresh provisions could be afforded them on the coast: and if a seaman fell sick, he would soon be carried to sea, (not as in a slave vessel, to encounter with new and fatal disorders on the middle passage) but in a wholesome ship, soon to experience the effects of his native air.

From the scurvy then, as arising from hence, and from the flux, rheumatism, and other complaints, as arising from the causes assigned, such a complication of disorders is fixed upon some of those that return, that it is a doubt whether the slave trade does not even render unserviceable more than it destroys: and a person need only see the crews of the slave vessels land, and trace them to their respective homes, or visit the infirmaries of the place, to be convinced of the melancholy truth of this assertion.

These being causes then, which are chiefly peculiar to the slave trade, or such as would be removed by its abolition, it is clear, that any vessels, going to the same coast for different commodities, could not possibly be liable to an equal loss. As a proof of this, (for in a case where
such

such opposition may be expected, I will not even hazard a just inference where a proof can be obtained) I shall submit to the inspection of the reader the following list of ten *wood* vessels, taken promiscuously, as they returned home to the same port, from the year 1781 to the August of the year 1787.

| <i>Ships Names.</i> | <i>Number of Men.</i> | <i>Number of Men lost.</i> |
|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Tryal | 12 | 2 |
| Lively | 20 | 2 |
| Rebecca. | 20 | 7 |
| Lyon | 28 | 0 |
| Rebecca | 16 | 2 |
| Cleveland | 8 | 2 |
| African Queen | 24 | 2 |
| St. Andrew | 8 | 0 |
| Cleveland | 8 | 0 |
| Hector | 20 | 3 |
| | <u>164</u> | <u>20</u> |

It is manifest from hence, that as several of the causes have been taken away, so several of the effects have been removed. The loss in the slave vessels from the same port is nearly a *fourth* of the whole number employed. The loss in these is not quite an *eighth*. In nine hundred and ten seamen, employed in the former, * *two hundred and sixteen* were among the dead. In nine hundred and ten, if employed in the latter, only *one hundred and ten* would have perished.

But there are two or three observations, which I must yet make. The slave vessels were upon an average scarcely seven months upon the coast. The wood vessels were from five to fifteen, or on an average nearly ten. The latter circumstance is of great importance, for if the trade alluded to were established, no vessel would have any necessity to be longer at the most than three: and it surely makes a considerable difference, whether men, as in the

* This is the number actually on the dead list, but it does not include the maimed, the blind, the unserviceable, or such as died after their discharge in the West-Indies or Great Britain, in consequence of the trade.

present

present case, are exposed to an unhealthy climate for ten months without intermission, or whether, being employed in the new trade, which would be regular, for the same period, they would go there and back twice in the time, and have two different intervals of refreshment on their native shore.

I must observe too, that the crews of the latter, on account of the present uncertainty of the trade in the natural productions of the country, were obliged to be up and down the rivers, to be much exposed, and to partake of one of the causes of the loss sustained in the former. Now, if the trade proposed were established, it is clear, that this cause also would be removed; and that the vessels of the merchants would be then nearly in the same circumstances as those in his Majesty's service, which are stationed from three to five months only on this coast, and have no necessity for beating up and down, or exposing their crews continually to the inclemency of the weather.

The loss which the crews of these experience is but trifling, and only such as they would have experienced, had they staid at home, as will appear by the following account.

A LIST of such of His MAJESTY's SHIPS

As have been stationed on the Coast of Africa

Since the last Peace,

With the Loss which they sustained in their respective Voyages.

| <i>Ships Names.</i> | <i>Number of Men.</i> | <i>Number of Men lost.</i> |
|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Race Horse | 100 | 0 |
| Bull Dog | 100 | 5 |
| Grampus * | 300 | } 3 |
| Grampus | 300 | |
| Grampus | 300 | |
| Nautilus | 100 | } 2 |
| Nautilus | 100 | |
| | <hr/> 1300 | <hr/> 10 |

* The Grampus has made three voyages to the Coast since the peace, and the Nautilus two.

It

It is clear from this account, that the loss, which the crews of his Majesty's ships have sustained upon this coast, is very inconsiderable. Notwithstanding this, they kept their watch, went into the country for wood and water, cut down the former with their own hands, navigated the vessel, and were frequently exposed. I would now ask what the crew of a merchant's vessel, if this regular trade were established, would, if we exclude the reception and discharge of the cargo, have more to do?

In short, it is clear from the facts and observations laid down already, (and it will be still more evident, if we consider that the lands of Africa could not be cleared and cultivated without greatly improving the climate) that if a regular trade were established in the natural productions of the place, and pursued with as much zeal and alacrity as we have embarked in that of slaves, this country would derive an inestimable benefit from the change. The seamen employed in it, would not only be cherished and preserved, but would be returned to their native country in health and vigour, in case of an emergency, in a few weeks:—whereas the slave trade not only *cannot support itself* by any naval subjects, which it attempts to rear, but *destroys those that have been reared and supported in other trades*. To which it must be added, that in case of an emergency, but little benefit (comparatively speaking) is to be derived from the services of those that survive; and that it converts many of those, whom it returns, from the most useful to the most unserviceable members of the state.

C H A P. VII.

The advocates for the slave trade have never offered but two of its appendages, as political arguments for its continuance. The first of these, "*that the slave trade is a nursery for our seamen,*" has been canvassed in the preceding chapters. The second, therefore, upon which an equal stress has been laid, is the only one now remaining for discussion.

This argument shall be given in the most distinct and advantageous manner in which I am able to convey it.

"There are two branches of the slave trade. By means of the first we supply the inhabitants of our own colonies with slaves, and by means of the second the colonists of foreign nations. The latter generally pay for them in hard dollars. These dollars are brought home, and deposited in our bank. Thus the nation becomes enriched, and the second branch of the trade now mentioned is peculiarly *politick*."

But I reply, if gold or silver be objects of such national advantage, abolish the slave trade. Open a trade to Africa in the natural productions of the country. The gold, which is now picked up in such scanty fragments, might be then found in abundance; and you might receive it in quantities, not only equivalent to the manufactures, which would pay for such of the slaves as are carried to the Spaniards or the French, but in a much greater proportion.

This, I apprehend, would have been a satisfactory answer to the argument advanced; but this branch of the trade is really so bad in its tendency, so fatal in its consequences, and so truly impolitick, that I cannot pass it over without some farther remarks.

It is clear, that every lot of slaves which we additionally import, or cause to be imported into their colonies, enables them to clear an additional piece of ground; every piece so gained, supplies additional produce. This produce employs additional seamen; and the great number of naval subjects, which we thus additionally raise for an enemy,

enemy, has a tendency (*which is not to be put into competition with the profits of the slave trade*) to diminish our naval importance.

But the evil does not stop here. The French, from a variety of causes, have been able to undersell us in this produce at the different markets of Europe. This has given birth to an additional fleet of ships employed in the exporting of it to other countries. Now, if we consider that French ships carry nearly double the number of seamen which ours of the same burthen do, we shall find that we are enabling our reputed enemies, by this branch of the trade, to dispute with us the sovereignty of the seas.

It is well known, that both the Spaniards and the French depend solely upon their American possessions for the recruit of their marine. It is as much an established maxim among them, as that the fisheries, if properly encouraged, would be the compleatest nursery for our own. For this purpose, the former have opened their ports duty free for the reception of slaves * for ten years. For this purpose the latter not only offer a bounty by the *ton* to the proprietors of such vessels as import them into the *uncultivated* parts of St. Domingo, but even afterwards a bounty by the *head* on every imported slave. To this *politick* conduct in our enemies, and to this *impolitick* conduct in us, who have suffered our own subjects to supply them at so publick a disadvantage to ourselves, is to be attributed one of the causes that rendered them so formidable at sea during the late war; for the reader must be informed, that since the year 1760, we have been assisting them with an unaccountable insanity to add to the strength of their marine.

This appendage then of the trade calls aloud for the immediate interference of the legislature. It is even more *detrimental* than the former. For we not only *increase* the naval strength of our *enemies*, but at the same time we *diminish* our own. This inverse ratio of loss and gain, which in their scale of naval importance is either way so much gain, and in ours either way so much loss, is of the

* Beginning in 1786.

most serious concern, and the effects, which it may produce in a course of years, so alarming, that they cannot be anticipated but with pain.

Though I may be thought to have said sufficient on this point, yet I cannot relinquish it, impressed as I am with a sense of its importance to this country, without submitting the following estimate to the reader.

Let us suppose that we are the means of taking only *fifteen hundred* slaves from the coast of Africa for the use of the French and Spanish colonies in a given time. It is certain, if we judge from the common rules, which are too accurate to be inapplicable on this occasion, that *six hundred* of them will be lost in the voyage and seasoning together. There will be left therefore *nine hundred* effective people for the purpose of cultivation. These will raise one thousand hogsheads of sugar every year, employ one new ship, and give birth to *twenty-five* seamen. This * will be the gain on *nine hundred* effective slaves.

On the other hand we are to consider, that the average number of slaves taken in a British ship being three hundred and sixty, four vessels will be employed in transporting fifteen, or nine hundred *effective* slaves, for the use of their plantations. The number of seamen lost in these, including the dead, and the unserviceable, will be *sixty*.

Thus in every importation of *nine hundred* effective slaves, there is a gain to the reputed enemies of this country of *twenty-five* seamen, and a loss to us of *sixty*; that is, a real gain to the former of *eighty-five*, besides the additional seamen employed in transporting the sugar from the ports of France to other nations. Now, if we consider that we are the means of importing annually *several thousand* slaves into the French and Spanish colonies, we shall more easily see the absurdity, if not the political wickedness, of our present conduct.

To sum up the whole. If we seriously consider the appendages of the trade, which have been falsely held out as political arguments for its continuance; if we consider that the trade proposed would have a different ten-

* This subject will be farther investigated in Chapter the 4th of the second part of this work.

dency,

dency, and be followed with different effects ; if we consider that it would not interfere with the productions of our present colonies ; that it would be attended with emolument to numerous individuals, and at the same time with substantial benefits to the state ; and if we additionally consider, that it might be the means of averting those heavy judgments, which the blood of the murdered Africans will undoubtedly bring upon us, it will appear, that there is *no one* political argument yet adduced, why the slave trade should be *continued* : There are *many and important ones* why it should be *suppressed*.

End of the First Part.



AN
E S S A Y
IN THE
I M P O L I C Y
OF THE
AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE.
IN TWO PARTS.

P A R T II.

C H A P. I.

S E C T I O N I.

THE arguments, which the patrons of the Slave trade have been accustomed to offer in its defence, may be divided into two kinds. The first comprehends the *positive advantages* that result from the prosecution of this trade; the second *the fatal consequences of its abolition*. The former have been examined already. The latter are to become the subject of the remaining part of the work.

It is said first, that if the slave trade is abolished, the planters will be in want of cultivators for their lands, and that many other melancholy consequences will result to them, as well as to the *slaves* and the *islands*, from the abolition of the trade.

F 3

I shall

I shall shew first, that it is in the power of the planters, if they please, to do without fresh supplies from the coast : I shall then shew, that if the importation of slaves is prohibited, no such want will be found, but on the other hand, that the number of cultivators will *increase* : and, lastly, that both the planters, the slaves, and the islands, will be *benefited* by the change.

To shew the truth of the first position, I shall have recourse to the following facts.

In the year 1771, a gentleman, now in England, became the proprietor of an estate, situated near Montego Bay, in the parish of Hanover, *Jamaica*. The number of slaves, at that time upon it, amounted to *two hundred and seventy-six*, all of whom had been *born in the same island*. In the year 1786, after fifteen years had elapsed, the number was found the *same* : nor had any purchase whatever been made within that period, nor was any at the end of it necessary.

In the year 1754, another gentleman succeeded to an estate in the same parish and island. It contained, at that time, *two hundred and thirty-three* slaves. By his last account, dated in June 1786, the number appeared to have increased, without any supplies from the coast, to *three hundred and fourteen*, though *fourteen* had been sent to other estates, or manumitted.

In the same island are six other estates, which have been in a similar situation, and for the truth of which I will become accountable, if required.

The first of these has supported itself, independently of the slave trade, for *twenty* years, and from no other cause, than that the owner, having thought it more to his interest that his slaves should increase by *birth* than by *purchase*, made his arrangements accordingly.

The second and third, situated in the parish of Clarendon, have had no occasion for a single recruit from Africa for many years.

The fourth, in the parish of St. James, found a resource within itself, and by the following means. The proprietor made it a rule to release every woman from all obligation to labour, as soon as she had a certain number
of

of children, fit to be put to work. The consequence of this was, that his slaves were continually on the *increase*.

The fifth and sixth, situated in the parish of St. John, and vale of Guanaboa, on account of the humane disposition of the overseer, and the moderate share of labour which he imposes upon the slaves, have no necessity for supplies.

The above is an account of such plantations as can be specified, and proved beyond the possibility of refutation, to have subsisted independently of the slave trade in the island of *Jamaica*. Many others are to be found there in the same predicament. But as situation, climate, and a variety of other circumstances (beyond those of gentle treatment) may be said to have contributed to bring them into so desirable a state, it will be proper to see if in other islands similar instances can be found.

In the year 1773, in the parish of Nichola Town and island of *St. Christopher*, was a plantation, which contained at that time *two hundred and ten* slaves. The proportion of females upon it was but very small, when compared with that of the males. This circumstance was much against it in point of the increase of its cultivators. It had, however, two advantages. The manager of it was an easy humane man, and his wife a discreet and tender nurse. From these circumstances alone, the number had increased in the year 1779 to *two hundred and twenty-eight*, and in the year 1781, when the gentleman, who undertakes to authenticate the fact, quitted the island, it had become, without any supply from the coast, *two hundred and thirty-four*.

In the same island, but in the adjoining parish of Cayon, is a plantation, that has supported itself in the same manner. The slaves upon it have been worked with method, and treated tolerably well. In the year 1765 they amounted to *one hundred and fifty-eight*: in the year 1766 to an *hundred and sixty*: and in the year 1781, by means of generation, to *one hundred and seventy-two*.

In the island of *Barbadoes* is a plantation, the present proprietor of which came into possession of it in the year 1774. At that time it contained *one hundred and nineteen* slaves. *Five* have been purchased since. In the year

1784 *twenty-seven* were added to it, by the bequest of a relation, who then died; so that the number, by extraordinary means, amounted to *one hundred and fifty-one*. By a survey in February 1788, it appeared, that they had increased, without purchase, to *one hundred and sixty-one*, though *three* had been sold, *three* had been killed by the hurricane in the year 1780, and *three* more had apparently died in consequence of it.

On another plantation, in the same island, were reckoned in the December of the year 1774 *one hundred and fifteen* slaves. In the year 1777 it received an addition, by purchase, of *thirty-two*. This raised the number to *one hundred and forty-seven*. Their present number, by means of generation, is *one hundred and sixty-three*, and it had been still greater, had not *five* been lost in the same hurricane as the former.

I must not forget to observe here, that the slaves upon these estates were treated with great humanity, and that much praise is due to the proprietor of the former, who came forward, in the most disinterested manner, to substantiate the facts.

There is a small estate in the same island, which has also experienced an increase by the same means. In the year 1764 it was let upon lease with *thirty* slaves upon it. The treatment which they have uniformly experienced since that period has been humane and mild: the consequence has been this, that no recruit has been purchased for the purpose of keeping up their stock, and that their present number is *forty-four*. In the same island are several other estates in a similar situation.

St. Christopher's

In the parish of Middle Island and Island of *Antigua* the proprietor of a considerable estate, in consequence of his humane directions, and a determination not to make any purchases from the coast, has had no supply (if we except a few slaves taken from a dismantled plantation) for *thirty* years.

In the island of *Dominique* is an estate, on which the slaves have been so much *increased* by humane treatment, as to have rendered any supply *unnecessary*.

In the island of *St. Domingo* is a plantation, belonging to the respectable house of Fouache, of Havre. These gentlemen

gentlemen came to the laudable resolution not to oppress their slaves. The quantity of work, which was accordingly given to *five hundred* of them to perform, was only such as *three hundred and fifty* would have been obliged to execute on other estates at the same time. The effects of this humane regulation are now visible. The slaves *multiply*, and the plantation *prosper*s.

In each of the Danish islands of *St. Thomas* and *St. Croix*, an estate can be pointed out, which has supported itself by *natural means*. That in the first, when the gentleman who communicated this intelligence left the islands, was in possession of Monsieur de Mary: that in the second of Baron Shimmelman. Both these were in a very *superiour* state of culture at that time, and had received no supplies whatever for many years.

In two of the *Granadillas* are two plantations, that are now in the same state. The proprietor of the first, when he took possession, found that several of the slaves upon it were then old. Notwithstanding this, and that these soon died, yet in consequence of the gentle dominion which he held over them, and his prudent management, so many have been born and preserved, and the lives of the rest so prolonged, that he has always had a sufficient number for the cultivation of the same land, without the purchase of any recruit from the coast. The other also, by the same means, has supported itself independently of the slave trade.

I have now mentioned several * plantations, situated

* To this list I may add the following extract from a Letter to the Dean of Middleham.—“According to the best of my remembrance (says the writer) the following estates for about twenty years, whilst under the management of *humane and merciful men*, kept up their stock of Negroes by the natural increase.—Sir William Fitzherbert's estate in St. Andrews, during the life of Mr. Rolstone his manager;—three estates of the late Colonel Newton in Christ Church and St. James's;—the estates of the late Mr. Haggat in St. George's and St. Peter's;—the estate of Mr. Graves in St. Lucy's;—the estate of the Honourable William Bishop in St. Lucy's;—the estate of Colonel Maynard in St. Michael's;—an estate of Sir Philip Gibbes, whilst under his own direction;—the estate of Mrs. Ferchuson in St. Peter's;—the estates of the late Thomas Alleyne, Esq. during the life of Mr. Rolstone;—the estate of Mrs. Street during the life of Mr. Johnstone.—These are all that I can at present recollect.”

either

either in the British, French, or Danish islands, that have supported themselves by natural means, and in which, during the reign of their respective proprietors either mentioned or alluded to, no reverse in the scale of their population has been experienced. It is my intention next to refer to such, as in this respect have experienced a change, or to such, as being contiguous to each other, but under opposite systems of administration, have shewn visibly their different effects.

In the parish of Cayon and island of St. Christopher was a certain plantation, which was under the management of a rigid and austere man. He continually harraised the slaves; making them work with but little intermission for six days, and on the *seventh* obliging them to be employed in the cultivation of their little spots. In consequence of this *continual obligation to labour, and want of rest*, the number of cultivators *decreased*, and an annual supply was necessary of about *one in ten* to keep up the stock. In the year 1763 this disciplinarian left them, to take upon him the management of a more considerable estate. He was succeeded by a man of an opposite character, who indulged the slaves with the free use of the *Sabbath*, treated them well, and took care of them when sick. Under his mild administration (notwithstanding the slaves were all of them native Africans, and notwithstanding they were but sparingly fed) the face of things was so much altered on that estate, that it had no necessity, as before, for any farther supplies from the coast.

In the same parish and island is a plantation, the situation of which has been exactly the reverse of the former. In the year 1766, the proprietor, who resided upon it, was in the possession of *an hundred and fifty-seven slaves*. He worked them judiciously. He fed them well. He treated them with tenderness and care. In the year 1772 he died; when it was found, that he had raised their number only in six years to *one hundred and eighty*, without any purchases from the coast. His successor, however, pursued a different plan. Let us mark the consequence.—His slaves, in the year 1781, were reduced to *one hundred and fifty-seven*, so that in nine years all the efforts of his predecessor were undone.

In

In the island of St. Domingo is an estate which has experienced a similar change. The owner considered himself as the father of his slaves: he never harassed them with excessive labour. He fed and treated them well: and so mild and gentle was his government, that it became a proverb, "as happy as a slave of Gallifet." Thus treated, their increase was rapid. About fifteen years ago he died. The present proprietor has since adopted a different system. His slaves continually decrease, and he loses by the change of management.

In the island of Antigua is another plantation, in which a similar revolution has taken place. It was formerly celebrated for the judicious and indulgent treatment of the slaves, that were then upon it. The owner resided on the spot. He saw his slaves happy. He saw them increase without purchase, and so rapidly, that his estate was considered as overstocked. Such was the situation of affairs under his gentle reign, when he was taken from the world. A different mode of treatment has been since introduced. The golden age has been converted into the iron. The slaves, nurtured by the fostering hand of their former proprietor, have fallen off, and the estate is now not only in want of an annual supply, but is involved in debt.

In the same island are two other plantations, which border upon each other. The owner of one of them long ago adopted the system of *immediate exertion*. He purchased chiefly males. He worked them hard, and with severity. The proprietor of the second declared in favour of the opposite plan. He proportioned the sexes accordingly, and he treated them well. The effects of the two different systems of administration will now be seen. The first has been in want of an annual supply. The latter has supported itself for more than *forty years*, and the slaves upon it have become so numerous, that they not only do the whole business of the estate, but are let out at task-work, to the great emolument of the proprietor, on other plantations.

I have now given a short history of no less than *twenty-six* plantations. From these, and others in a similar situation, it will appear, that where there have been any favourable

favourable circumstances, such as the proper proportion of the sexes in one, gentle treatment in a second, any indulgence in point of labour in a third, and the like, *there the slaves have uniformly increased*: that where the contrary have taken place, *there they have decreased, and have been in want of supplies*. That the same estate, which under a mild administration has been overstocked, has, under an opposite system, annually lost a part of its labourers: that the same, which during a reign of rigour has been constantly requiring recruits, has in that of humanity supported itself for a while, and at length precluded the necessity of a supply: and that in certain plantations contiguous to each other, sharing the same climate, and situated on the same kind of soil, but under opposite forms of government, the one has been perpetually losing its labourers, the other has been overstocked: In short, that it is *at the option* of the planter, whether supplies are requisite or not; certain regulations producing the one, and the contrary the opposite effects.

Indeed, the very idea, that the planters cannot proceed without fresh supplies from the coast, is repugnant to reason.

For let us first, for a moment, look upon the unfortunate Africans in the light of *cattle*. Is it not in the power of any *farmer*, who prefers breeding to purchasing, to supply himself with animals of labour from his own stock?

Let us now consider them as *men*. It is an invariable law, that any society of people, under common advantages, must at least keep up their number, if not increase; otherwise Providence, in calling the human species into life, must have defeated his own design. What then should hinder the Africans, peculiarly prolific in their nature, carried to a climate similar to that which they have left, and treated with common humanity, from continuing their own species, and precluding the necessity of a supply? In short, in whatever point of view we consider it, the position is equally absurd.

Mr. Long, the author of the History of Jamaica, who more than once takes an opportunity of ridiculing the same notion, has even gone so far, as to reduce the probability of the increase of the Africans in the colonies to stated rules.

rules.—“ If (says he) the number of hogheads, made on a plantation, exceeds or even equals the whole aggregate of negroes employed upon it, but *few children will be brought up on such an estate*, whatever number may be born; for the mothers will not have sufficient time to take due care of them: and if they are put under the charge of some elderly woman or nurse, as the custom is in many places, it cannot be supposed that they meet with the same tenderness, as might be expected from their parents. But where the proportion of annual produce is about half an hoghead for every negroe, there they will, in all likelihood, *increase very rapidly*; and *not much less so*, where the ratio is of two hogheads to every three negroes, which I take to be a good mean proportion: agreeably to which, an estate, making communibus annis two hundred hogheads, ought to muster on its list (old and young) three hundred negroes; and if it makes three hundred hogheads, four hundred and fifty such negroes, and so on. An estate so handed may not only, *cæteris paribus*, *save the expence of buying recruits*, but may every year afford *some addition* to the first number, of which I have *known incontestable examples in Jamaica.*”*

But this, I apprehend, will be found sufficient. For when the reader reflects on the number of estates now specified, that have supported themselves, independently of the slave trade; when he considers the uniform increase in some, the revolutions that have happened in others, and refers them to their proper causes; or when he consults only his own unbiassed reason, he cannot but see the inconsistency of the argument, which but too generally prevails, “ that the planters cannot proceed without fresh supplies from the coast.”

S E C T I O N II.

Having now shewn the truth of the first position by means of undeniable facts, I shall inquire into the proba-

* Long. Vol. II. Page 437, 438.

bility

bility of the first consequence, which, it is said, will be experienced in the islands from the abolition of the trade in slaves.

It is said first, that "if the importation of slaves is prohibited, the planters will be in want of cultivators for their lands."

This first effect will be best seen by tracing the different *causes* of the diminution of slaves in the colonies, and the *effect* which the abolition will have upon each of these.

It is well known, that many of the proprietors of post-horses in this country adopt the following plan. They purchase a horse at a certain price, and at a certain age. They drive him through twice the work which he ought to perform in a given time. If he lasts for a determined period, they consider themselves as repaid with profit. If, after this, he has not a leg to stand upon, they do not care.

This mode of reasoning, which is execrable even when applied to the brute creation, is in the colonies put into execution on the human species. It has been often calculated by some of the planters there, whether it is more to their interest to work out a slave, by an uncommon imposition of labour, in five or six years, and supply his place by a new recruit from the coast, to be worked up and succeeded in the same manner, or to breed from their present stock, and to work them with moderation. Some have wisely adopted the latter plan; but the former has been but too generally followed.

It is clear, that on all those plantations where this inhuman system prevails, it is impossible for the planter to do without fresh supplies. His whole plan is confessedly against it. He has made his calculations accordingly. He has stated the time, at which human nature is capable of sustaining itself under his task of drudgery and his lash. This diabolical determination, to employ new generations of men from the coast of Africa, and to work them up in a stated time, instead of rearing them by natural means, and working them with moderation, is one grand source of the necessity for the present annual supplies.

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The first effect, which the * abolition of the slave trade must have upon the unfeeling planters described, would be, that their execrable calculations would be stopped. No new generations of men would be then to be had, as before. They must immediately change their plan. They must breed. They must find that resource within themselves, which their avarice has taught them to reject; and they must immediately turn a system of calculated oppression, and murder, into that of lenity, tenderness, and preservation.

Such is the effect which the abolition of the slave trade must have upon this cause of the diminution of slaves in the colonies. There are other estates, however, where these calculations are not made, which are yet in want of supplies.

In almost all of them it will be found, that but little care is taken, or can be taken, according to the present system of things in the colonies, of those infants that are born. An incredible number of these annually perish, who, if preserved, would have been substantial supplies.

The disorder, which takes many of them off, is the *locked jaw*. This arises from various causes, but is particularly chargeable upon the comfortable situation of the mother, who is deprived of necessities, and of the power of paying that proper attention to her child, in preserving it from cold and damps, which its infant-situation requires; for it is a remarkable fact, that this disorder passes by other infants in the colonies, whether black or white, of whom proper care has been taken.

It is usual for them too, before they are weaned, to accompany their mothers to the field, who tie them behind their backs, and carry them through the labour of the day, or leave them in a furrow. Thus exposed to a vertical sun, and afterwards to the dews of the evening, or to very heavy rains, and having received hitherto but a slender and unwholesome support from the breasts of their overheated mothers, many of them are taken off. Those, who survive the weaning, are left neglected at home, or

* I mean not only the abolition of the Slave Trade by the British nation, but a total prohibition of the importation of slaves into the colonies from any other quarter.

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are put under the care of an old and infirm woman, who cannot be supposed to have that affection for them, which their parents have, and who is often incapable of performing her allotted task. By these, and other means, some of those, who have escaped for a little time, are added to the infant dead.

The effect, which the abolition of the slave trade must have on this second cause, would be this. Every care and attention would be paid to the rearing of the new generation. Convenient rooms would be built on each estate for the accommodation of the women in the last stage of their pregnancy. The mother would have more time to herself, and more indulgencies. In some estates she would have, perhaps, a release from all future obligation to labour, after she had reared her third child; in others she might receive a donation. These regulations, if put into force, would immediately endear the proprietor to the parents; would prove a constant incitement to their emulation; and would be the means of preserving a great number of recruits, who would otherwise have annually perished.

A third cause of the diminution of slaves in the colonies is the *very scanty allowance of provision*, which is given them on many plantations. It is too general a custom to spread almost every acre, that is plantable, with canes. But little land, and even that the worst, is allotted for provisions for the slaves. Thus the labourers, whose preservation should have been the first and greatest object, are left destitute of sufficient nutriment and support.

A fourth is the *incessant and intolerable labour* which they are often obliged to undergo. Perhaps their proprietor is extravagant, or involved. To support his luxuries on the one hand, or to clear his incumbrances on the other, he has recourse to the finews of his slaves. Uncommon exertions are deemed necessary for the purpose: and if his situation should not be similar to that which I have supposed, certain it is, that too often the reputation of the manager, and his continuance in office, depend more, in the eye of his employer, on the *number of hogsheds* of sugar annually made, than on the preservation of the slaves.

A fifth

A fifth cause is *cruel and severe usage*, such as the constant application of the lash, confinement, torture, and other barbarous treatment, whether for real or imaginary faults. This depends, in some measure, on the discipline of the colony, on the absence of the proprietor from his estate, or on the unfeeling disposition of the manager, who has none but a temporary interest, and who of course cannot be concerned in any future advantage, which might accrue to the proprietor by the preservation of his slaves. Under such managers, (says a sensible writer) "an increase is not more to be expected, than an increase from a flock of sheep, if a wolf were *to be the shepherd*."

In consequence then of the three causes that have been mentioned last, namely, a scanty allowance of food, incessant and intolerable labour, and cruel and severe usage, either existing separately or conjointly on an estate, several of the slaves, whose lives have become a burthen to them, destroy themselves. Others fly into the woods; where, exposed to the cold of the night, attacked by the pangs of hunger and thirst, and lacerated in their bodies by the prickly teeth with which every shrub is armed in that country, they soon perish: while those, who by vigilance, terror, or other means, are retained at home, are necessarily worn out in their prime, and their lives shortened. These circumstances therefore occasion, and must ever occasion, as long as they exist, a necessity for annual supplies.

The effect, which the abolition of the slave trade must necessarily have upon those who feed, work, or treat their slaves as above described, is evident. Provision, which has hitherto been the last, must become the first consideration with the planter. A part of the land, occupied by canes, must be appropriated to the support of his slaves, and a sufficient quantity of the necessaries of life must be allowed them. Regular hours of rest, and machines of labour must be introduced. The lash, that was formerly lifted up for imaginary faults, or for the indulgence of passion and caprice, must be kept down. Punishments must be more commensurate to the offence. A system of treatment more moderate and humane must be adopted. It must immediately strike the proprietor, that if his slave

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should fall by ill-judged severity or neglect, it will be long before he can replace him.

There are various other causes of the diminution of slaves in the colonies, all of which must be equally annihilated in their turn. New regulations, adapted to the suppression of each, must immediately take place. I say "*must* take place," because the planter, unless he adopts them, will have no other prospect, than that of inevitable ruin. And that he will madly throw himself from the precipice, when he can avoid it with *solid advantage* to himself, is a position too ridiculous to be admitted.

If these regulations then, or similar to these, should take place, as they inevitably must, when every prospect of a future supply is taken away; if population should be really encouraged; if a less proportion of labour should be required, food more plentifully supplied, and a system of tenderness be adopted in the place of that of calculated severity and oppression; if, moreover, the progeny of the then slaves should have the same attention bestowed upon them, as others of the human race, it is not only self-evident, that, like other human beings, they will be able to continue their species, but, being endued with a more prolific nature than the rest, that they must *rapidly increase*; and that the planters will be so far from being in want of cultivators for their lands, that they will soon be enabled to *put new land into culture without any purchases from the coast*.

SECTION III.

I have now considered the abolition of the slave trade as far as it would have an influence on the present or future *number* of the slaves: I come now to the second point of inquiry, namely, to consider the immediate or future effect which it would have upon the *planters*, the *slaves* themselves, and the *islands*: for it has been said, that many other melancholy consequences would arise to these by the abolition of the trade.

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The first effect, that the planter would immediately experience, would be this. He would save the money formerly expended in the purchase of new slaves, and of course avoid the inconceivable difficulties which he has now necessarily to encounter on this account.

That the reader may form a notion of the distress under which he frequently labours from this circumstance, and of the advantages resulting from the change, I shall give him the sentiments of Mr. Long, who was too much attached to the interests of his friends in the islands, to deceive them in this particular.

* "The purchase of new negroes (says he) is the most chargeable article attending these estates, and the *true source* of the distresses, under which their owners suffer: for they involve themselves so deeply in debt to make these *inconsiderate* purchases, and lose so many by disease or other means in the seasoning; that they become unable to make good their engagements, are *plunged in law suits and anxiety*; while for want of some prudent regulation in the right husbanding of their stock, and *promoting its increase by natural means*, they entail upon themselves a necessity of drawing perpetual recruits of unseasoned Africans, the expense of which forms only a new addition to their debts and difficulties."

To confirm this, I shall state a few particular facts. In the island of Jamaica four courts are annually held, namely, in the months of February, May, August, and November. About three thousand new actions are usually brought at each of these, chiefly on bonds; and of these bonds about *nine-tenths* are such as have been given to the factors for new slaves.

In the same island about *five hundred thousand pounds* passed through the hands of a certain sheriff in three years. This prodigious sum had been procured by the sale of goods, taken chiefly on execution on such bonds, as had been given for *the same purpose* as the former.

The principal part of those who were confined in the goals of the same island, during the same period, consisted of people whose persons had been seized, after the issuing

* Long's History of Jamaica. Vol. I. Page 437:

out of executions on judgment, to make up that deficiency in their payment *for slaves*, to which their goods had not been found adequate.

It is easy to see from hence, and the foregoing quotation from Mr. Long, that I have not been stating a visionary or chimerical advantage. The planter, in consequence of the regulations that would unavoidably follow the abolition of the slave trade, would protract the lives of his present slaves. In the interim, the rising generation would be shooting up. To save therefore the purchase-money usually expended in these, to be freed from a source of continual inquietude and distress, and at the same time to experience no diminution in the returns of his estate, is an advantage so substantial and important at the first sight, as to need no farther illustration.

There is a second, however, which he would also immediately feel. His slaves would become more valuable. Whatever may be his property in these at the present moment, certain it is, that, on the moment of the abolition of the slave trade, it would be considerably increased. Is the value of it but barely adequate to the discharge of his debts?—He would be able to free himself from these, and to have an overplus for himself.—In short, whatever may be his situation in the islands, he would derive in this respect an immediate benefit from the change.

But his *future* would be infinitely greater than his *present* advantages. His slaves, which would become immediately more valuable in consequence of the abolition, would, in process of time, become more valuable from another consideration. Let us view them therefore at a distant period. Let us see their situation in about twenty years, after this great event has taken place.

At this period, it is to be presumed, that all the slaves in the islands would be *Creoles*.

In the first place, they would have been inured from their infancy, in a regular gradation of employment, to labour. They would of course be more hardy, and capable of the plantation work, than any of their predecessors, who, having led, perhaps, a life of indolence in their own country, have been but little capable of sustaining



ing the fatigue which they have been sentenced to undergo.

They would, secondly, be more ready and expert. Born on the islands, they would attain our language, and understand us immediately: whereas, their predecessors, the imported Africans, have been unable, for a length of time, to comprehend our meaning.

These circumstances would greatly increase their price, if exposed to sale, and of course the property of their possessors: and as a proof of it, I appeal to the planter, whether he does not consider a *Creole*, at this moment, of *twice* the value of an *imported slave*.

This is one of the *future* advantages which the planter would unavoidably experience in consequence of the abolition of the trade. I shall now proceed to enumerate the rest.

His work would be better done. This is evident from the habit of labour, which his slaves would have acquired from their infancy, and (if I may be allowed the expression) their *apprenticeship* to their work.

More of it would be done in the same time. This may appear a paradox to many. But the labour of those slaves, who are ruled with a rod of iron, is inconceivably small. Will a man work with alacrity for the master who starves, tortures, and oppresses him? Will he work with alacrity where he has no interest in his labour? Where, if his sinews are worn out with exertion, he is not suffered to partake, in any degree, the fruits of his pains? But, reverse the scene. Let him be treated with tenderness. Let his wants be supplied. This will operate as an incitement to his exertions: gratitude will demand a return; and his labour will carry with it, wherever it is traced, distinguishing marks of the change. This is not merely a speculative position. It is founded on experience. Many planters have been witnesses of the fact.

A certain American refugee fled with his slaves, during the late war, to the island of Jamaica. It was his constant custom to treat them well, to visit them in their sickness, to attend to their complaints, to consider them rather as servants for whom he had a regard, than as his slaves. In consequence of this, their indulgencies were

many. These, however, were not lost upon them. They brought their master the first fruits of their little spots, of their poultry, of their swine. They behaved in an orderly manner, and toiled for him with alacrity and joy.

These indulgencies, however, did not fail to attract the notice of the managers of the neighbouring plantations. They looked upon them with a painful eye. They at length waited upon the dispenser of them, and assured him, that if he continued his mild administration, he would ruin the discipline of his neighbour's slaves. His reply was this: — "I treat my slaves with lenity. They *work four hours in the day less than yours. Notwithstanding these indulgencies they do more work than yours, who are whipped through it from morning to night. The comparative advantages are so great in my favour, from my present system, that, if I paid no regard to the calls of humanity, I must continue to pursue it.*"

Such would be the case were the slave trade abolished; for such humane treatment, and such indulgencies would be the consequence of the abolition, as would prove an incitement to the exertions of the slaves, more than the stimulus of the lash, or the goad of avarice and oppression.

To this advantage of *having a greater quantity of work performed in the same time*, which would increase the annual profit or returns of the planter, another would be added. In consequence of the abolition of the slave trade, he would have been under the necessity of appropriating a certain portion of land to the sustenance of his cattle, and his slaves. We should see him, therefore, at the future period assigned, in a comfortable situation: not uneasy and agitated as before, not depending upon a precarious subsistence from distant parts, especially in the time of war, but having every resource on his own estate, and in his own power.

But if any *future* advantage, which he would experience from the abolition, is to be estimated higher than the rest, it would be this,—that he would sleep in peace, and be no longer under apprehensions from those private cabals, and
open

open insurrections, which his former conduct had so deservedly occasioned.

Many of the unfortunate people, who are brought into the colonies, have been kidnapped, have been forcibly torn from their connections. The remembrance of these is painful. It frequently excites the sigh, and makes them dissatisfied and restless. Others, if procured in a fairer manner, have been yet unused to labour. The severe task, imposed upon them in the colonies, is of course only the more sensibly felt. This, with cruel usage, confinement, torture, and other circumstances, prevents an attachment to their masters, makes them revengeful, vigilant to gratify that revenge, and indulgent of it, if occasion offers.

The slaves, on the other hand, at the period assigned, would be all *Creoles*, and in a different predicament. They would not have been violently separated, like their predecessors, from that country, and those connections, which they esteemed most in life. They would have been inured from their infancy to labour, and would find no hardship in their allotted task. They would not be so keenly sensible of the loss of liberty, which is perhaps, of all others, the greatest incitement to an insurrection. A bird, that has been bred up in captivity, does not repine like one that has been taken from the woods, and confined within the narrow limits of a cage. Such would be the situation of the slaves at this future period; and so justly (as the reader will see) are these consequences to be apprehended, that it is a matter of fact, “* that the chief actors in the seditions and mutinies, which at different times have broken out in the islands, have been the *imported Africans*,” whereas some of the *Creole slaves* have been intrusted with arms in their hands *without abuse*.

These would be the chief advantages that would result to the planter from the abolition of the trade in slaves. A source of continual embarrassment and distress would be immediately taken away. His property would be considerably increased; his annual returns larger: he would

* Long's History of Jamaica. Vol. II. p. 444.

feel himself in an independent situation, in point of subsistence, either in peace or war; and he would have the unspeakable satisfaction of going to his bed fearless of any private machinations, and in full confidence that his property as well as his person would be secure.

Having considered what would be the immediate or future situation of the *planter*, in consequence of the change, I come now to that of the *slave*.

If the slave trade were abolished, it is evident that many mild and salutary regulations would immediately take place; that the slave would be better fed; that his hours of labour would be reduced to fewer in the day; that his person would be more secure; that he would have the power of appeal; and that every spur, that could promote population, would be administered. These then, or similar regulations, unavoidably taking place, we should see a material change in his situation. We should see him in possession of a little time to himself, and devoting it either to his own amusement, or in the improvement of his little spot, to his future advantage and support. We should see him, not chilled with horror at the sight of his proprietor as before, but smiling with gratitude and joy. We should see him *legally* engaging in the bands of connubial happiness; while his wife would have time to nurse and enjoy her child, not regretting that she had brought it into the world to inherit a life of perpetual misery and woe, but to be a witness of her new situation, and to share the change. Thus experiencing, on one hand, a diminution of their former rigours, and raised to positive advantages on the other, they would both *immediately* be admitted to a certain portion of *happiness*, and their condition be considerably improved.

This change having once taken place, and great benefit having necessarily arisen to the planter from the adoption of it, there can be no difficulty in anticipating the *future* situation of the slave; for it is natural to suppose, that if advantages should have been found to accrue to the planter in proportion to his humanity, he would still proceed; and when that system, which was the consequence of the abolition of the slave trade, had had its due operation, he would

would adopt a second still more lenient and equal. Every new indulgence of this kind would advance the slave in the scale of social life, and improve his condition. Every improvement of his condition would qualify him the more for the reception of *Christianity and freedom*; and if ever these glorious events were to be brought to pass, then would be the æra, in which happiness would be the most extensively diffused in the colonies, and the estate of the planter be productive of the greatest * gain.

I come now to the consequences which would result to the *islands* by the abolition of the slave trade.—These consequences would be truly valuable, as the islands would be safe and impregnable during the time of war.

It is well known that the planters, at this period, have been *in general* in continual alarm. The fugitive slaves have never failed to make their incursions, and to be ready to join the foe. Their own slaves on the plantations have been peculiarly ripe for a revolt, and have only waited for an opportunity of gratifying their revenge. In short, they have been well assured, that if the enemy could only have contrived to arm them, a general massacre would have taken place, and the islands have been lost.

This will shew, in a more conspicuous light, the great importance of the change that would take place in consequence of the abolition of the trade. In a few years all the slaves upon the islands would be *Creoles*, and as every man has naturally an attachment to his native spot, so the Creole would have a partiality for these. In these islands also would be his relatives and friends, his little property, his spot of nutrition, and his home. He would speak the same language as his master, contract the same habits, imbibe the same prejudices. These, and

* Attempts have been made in a certain *French colony*, for some time past, to bring the slaves by degrees into the enjoyment of *liberty and property*. And the progress of this establishment tends to prove, that a similar system, if general, would be not only conducive to the *prosperity of the colony*, but also to the *private interest of the present proprietors of plantations*. In America many slaves have been *liberated*. The consequence has been, that the face of the country has been altered, the lands in a higher state of cultivation, and the proprietor enriched. In Cochin China the sugar, which is wholly made there by *free men*, can be afforded at *one-seventh* of the price, for which it is sold, when made by *slaves*.

other

other circumstances, would excite his alacrity, his vigilance, his courage, his exertions, and he would be found to the islands a steady and faithful protector, and to the invaders a bitter and a formidable foe.

To shew that this is not merely ideal, or without foundation, I shall relate a fact, that happened during the late war. In the island of *Barbadoes* the greatest part of the slaves are *Creoles*. They are used in general with *more humanity* there than in the other islands; though their treatment is by no means such as they would experience, were the trade abolished. Notwithstanding this, several of them were selected, and formed into a military corps. They were found to be vigilant, and ready, on every occasion: and no *one* instance could be found on the whole island where a slave had abused the confidence reposed in him, or had turned his arms to a bad purpose.

I have now enumerated the principal consequences that would unavoidably result to the *planters*, the *slaves* themselves, and the *islands*, from the abolition of the slave trade. I need not observe, that they are such, as are highly important in themselves, truly pleasing in the anticipation, and most devoutly to be prayed for. Indeed, there is no prospect, that we are obliged to view at a distance, that is so charming and delightful. For let us see the planter at a future period, not the tyrant and destroyer, but the shepherd and the guardian of his slaves. Let us see them looking upon him in return as the dispenser of their blessings; gratefully acknowledging his favours, endeared to him from the ties of principle and gratitude. Let us see them annually improving both in their temporal and religious state. Then shall the chains of despotism be broken. The Dæmon torture shall throw her instruments into the sea; commerce extend her swelling sails; embarrassments be no more; security and confidence established; a golden age, in short, reign in the colonial plains; and a spot, that was once the scene of accumulated persecution and murder, be the mansions of peace, security, happiness, and joy.

If this desirable change then were to take place, as it inevitably must; if all these blessings were to follow; how additionally *impolitick* is the *slave trade*, which is the *only*

only impediment to their realization; which, by holding up to the planter the prospect of an annual supply, only encourages him to waste and dissipate human life, and to be cruel; and which, by furnishing him with people deprived of the natural rights of men, fills him frequently with alarm, and obliges him often to adopt a system of discipline and oppression, that will for ever hinder him from experiencing the solid advantages described,

CHAP. II.

SECTION I.

The patrons of the slave trade having founded an argument, in support of their cause, on the fatal consequences of its abolition to the colonies, derive another from the baneful effects which would result from it to this kingdom.

They assert first, that if such an event were to take place, it would annihilate a considerable branch of the revenue.

No argument, perhaps, has been deemed of greater importance by the opponents of the abolition, than this. They have been assiduous, both in their conversation and in their writings, to disseminate it. They have never failed to mention it too with their wonted confidence, and but too many have implicitly admitted it without an investigation of the fact. It will be proper therefore to examine into the truth of their assertion, and to see how far the objection, advanced by them, is valid.

The loss which the revenue might sustain in consequence of the abolition of the slave trade, could be effected only in three ways. It might be supposed to suffer, first, by the loss of duty on such goods as are usually exported to Africa, and the exportation of which, on such an event, would cease. This point I shall immediately consider. The remaining two shall be noticed in their proper place.

To investigate this, it will be proper to enumerate the articles that are usually exported from this country to the coast.

coast. These may be divided into three classes, namely, British, East-Indian, East-Indian and Venetian conjointly.

In the first class may be reckoned

| | |
|-------------|--------------|
| Gunpowder | Pewter-ware |
| Shot | Earthen-ware |
| Guns | Glass |
| Gun-flints | Brandy |
| Cutlasses | Manilloes |
| Knives | Neptunes |
| Brass-pans | Cottons |
| Iron-bars | Linens |
| Lead-bars | Woollens |
| Copper-rods | Fustians. |

In the second class may be reckoned

| | |
|-------------|------------|
| Blue cloths | Chelloes |
| Brawles | Nicamees |
| Bejutapants | Negampants |
| Callicoes | Romalls |
| Cushtaes | Photacs |
| Chintz | |

In the third class may be reckoned

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Arrangoes | Coral |
| Cowries | Great bugle |
| Amber beads | Small bugle |

The articles mentioned in the first class, being of the production and manufacture of Great Britain, pay no * duty on exportation, and of course, were they never more to be carried to the coast, the *revenue* could sustain no injury by the change.

Those in the second consist of such as are either prohibited, and neither pay duty nor receive drawback, or of such as have the whole duty returned in case of exportation to Africa.

* Printed cottons pay excise, which is, however, drawn back on exportation.

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Those in the third are all of them subject to duty, but the * drawback is so great, that, after the receipt of it, scarcely sufficient is left to pay for the proportion of salary of those in office, under whose cognizance they fall.

It is evident, therefore, that the revenue could not suffer at all by any loss of duty on the *goods exported* from hence to Africa, were the trade abolished.

The second way, in which the revenue might be supposed to sustain a loss, might be by a *loss of duty on such of the productions of Africa, as are usually imported from thence into this kingdom, and the importation of which would cease.*

A few words only will be necessary to ascertain this point. The productions of Africa are brought to us by two different means of conveyance, namely, of the wood and of the slave vessels. The greater share of them is imported by the former, so that whether the slave trade were abolished or not, this proportion would still continue to be brought. If it were abolished, that part of them, which is now brought home by the latter, to the detriment of the fair trader upon the coast, would fall in their proper channel. More wood vessels would be immediately fitted out, nor would any diminution whatever, either immediately or in future, be experienced by the revenue *in this instance*, from the abolition of the trade in slaves.

The third, and only remaining way in which it can be supposed that the national purse would suffer, must be by a *loss of duty on rum and sugar*, both of which being produced by the toil of slaves, might either decrease in quantity, or be annihilated in the islands, were the trade abolished.

* This will be seen from the following statement.

| | | Duty. | Drawback. |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------|-----------|
| Arrangoes } for every £ 100 of the { | | £ 31 13 4 | £ 29 16 0 |
| Cowries, } real value thereof { | | | |
| Beads Amber, } per lb. | | 0 4 5 | 0 4 2 |
| — Coral, } | | | |
| Bugle Small, per lb. | | 6 2 7 | 0 2 5 |
| Bugle Great, per lb. | | 0 1 7 | 0 1 6 |

To this statement I may add, that so far is the revenue from being benefited, that the bounties, paid out of it on goods exported to Africa, amount to ten times more than any duties which it receives.

With

With respect to a diminution of the usual quantity of these valuable articles, which would of course occasion a diminution of revenue, I apprehend there is no person so extravagant as to suppose, that it could take place when the rising generation were grown up. It will be therefore proper to inquire first, what would be the situation of things, from the moment of the abolition of the slave trade, till the rising generation could be brought into employ.

The age at which the young Creoles are usually put into the field, is that of *fifteen*. This, therefore, is the space of time in which I am to inquire whether there would be any diminution of the articles of revenue before specified.

The first question that seems naturally to occur on the occasion is this,—Whether the number of labourers would be less in this than in any former period of an equal length?

It is very certain that there would be in the islands, at the moment of the abolition, Creoles of every age, from one to fifteen, ready to fill up in succession the places of many of those who would unavoidably be taken off within this period. It will be said, however, that these would not be numerous enough of themselves to supply the whole deficiency by death. But I reply, that in consequence of the regulations, both in point of labour, food, and treatment, that would necessarily follow the abolition of the slave trade, the bills of mortality would be less crowded, and that the lives of all those slaves, at that time upon the islands, would be considerably prolonged. By means, therefore, of this protraction of human life on the one hand, which would render perhaps only half the former number of recruits necessary in a given time, and by means of this regular succession of Creoles on the other, more of whom would live to come to maturity than in any former period of the same length, there could be but little diminution of these articles from the diminution of effective labourers in the colonies.

But let us suppose, for a moment, that the number of labourers would be less: still no diminution of these articles is necessary: for a less number, under tender regulations,

tions, would do as much work as a greater, without them, in the same time. It is not on the number, but on the condition, the ability, the willingness of the labourer, that the quantity of work depends. On estates, where the lash has been incessantly applied, the slaves have universally done much less in proportion, than upon those where they have met with indulgencies, and been treated like human beings. Such would be the case during this period, and if the number of slaves were to become less, by *one-third*, than before, it is not necessary that any diminution should take place, either in the quantity of sugar and rum, or in the revenue, that may be expected by the state.

Again. Let us suppose them to be reduced even to one-half of their former number, till the rising generation were put into employ.—Let the planters introduce machines of husbandry, and one-half, or one-tenth, or even *one-thirtieth*, would do as much work in the same time as all of them together were able to do before, under their *then* system of labour.

As a proof of this, (for it is not a bare conjecture,) I shall select the two following passages from * Mr. Long.

“ It was found, says he, that one plough, used on an estate in the parish of Clarendon, turned up as much ground in one day, and in a *much better* manner than *one hundred* negroes could perform with their hoes in the same time.”

“ When the plant is made in the furrow, *following the plough*, I think it demonstrable, that more ground can be turned up and planted in this way in *one day*, than can be holed and planted in the usual way in *three*, and with a *tenth* less number of able negroes.”

Such is the language of Mr. Long, and it must be evident, I think, to every impartial person, both from these and the preceding observations, that the revenue could not † possibly suffer by any diminution of the usual quantity

* Long's History of Jamaica. Vol. I. Page 449, 450.

† Suppose that their lives would not be protracted, that less work would be done in the same time, that machines of labour would be rather an hindrance than a gain, still the deficiency might be made up by foreign sugar, (till the rising generation were grown up) and the revenue be improved.

quantity of *rum* and *sugar*, till the rising generation were capable of being put into employ. It has appeared before, that it could not suffer by any diminution of the *exports* to Africa, or *imports* from thence into this kingdom: and if it could sustain no injury in either of the three ways now mentioned, I do not see how it is possible that it could suffer at all.

Thus, in whatever point of view we consider the subject, there could necessarily be no diminution of the revenue. But, on the other hand, when we come to consider the great prolongation of life, which must result from those regulations that the abolition of the slave trade must introduce, the better condition of the slaves from the same cause, their greater zeal and alacrity, the truth of the maxim, that those, who are best treated, universally work the best, and the extraordinary advantages of the introduction of machines of husbandry, by which one-thirtieth only of the former strength would be required, it is highly *probable* that the revenue would be *increased*, and it is *certain* that it *could* be made, under proper regulations, to receive a *greater augmentation* in this, than in any former period of an equal length.

Having now inquired what would be the situation of the revenue, till the rising generation were put into employ, I shall inquire what its situation would probably be after this period: for the more remote, as well as the less distant consequences of the abolition of the slave trade, should be had in view.

It is probable, that some of the slaves, who were in bondage at the time of the abolition, would be then alive; but as many of these would be past their labour, and the rest would be going off, I shall content myself with having only mentioned them. The effective, or rising strength then on the islands, would consist of *Creoles*. These would be found, in a regular succession, from the age of *thirty to one*. They would have been born too in the order of nature, that is, the sexes would have been properly proportioned by means of birth, which is not the case in the colonies at the present day.

improved. For this, from its cheapness, would bear a heavier duty, and yet come into our hands at a more reasonable rate than that from the British colonies.

Having

Having this advantage then; having, moreover, the advantages of a prolifick nature, of living in a climate to which they have been habituated from their infancy, and of being treated in an humane and tender manner, far beyond any of their predecessors, they would from this period very rapidly increase, and a much greater number of slaves would be then found in the islands, than at any former time. This would evidently be the case. It is no speculative conjecture. It is founded on the invariable rule of nature, on the immutable decrees of the Deity, that every society of people, among whom the sexes are properly proportioned, and common advantages are enjoyed, *must increase*.

Let us now consider the effects of this increase. The planter, having more hands than before, will seek for employment for his supernumeraries. He will seek for it, because he will not support them in idleness, and because his own interest will be so materially concerned. Two prospects will then present themselves, namely, the *improvement of the old land*, and the *clearing and cultivation of the new*.

There are few estates in the colonies; or indeed in any other part of the world, in which many more hands could not be employed to advantage, than are employed in them at present; or which have arrived at that degree of cultivation, to which they are capable of being brought. It is evident therefore, in the first case, that the same spot that produced a certain number of hogsheads of sugar annually, would be made to produce *more*, and that the *revenue* would derive a *proportionate benefit* from the change. This would be the first natural consequence of the *increase*.

In the second case the advantages would be similar and great. The planter would direct a part of his agricultural strength to the clearing of new land, and the augmentation of his estate. In this respect he has been hitherto confined: for the expense of purchasing new slaves has been so heavy, and so many of them have constantly died in the arduous employment, arduous not only in itself, but particularly to those who have been unused to labour, that his attempts have very rarely been made but with loss, and have

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often

often ruined him. The case, however, at the period now in view, would be reversed. His * *Creoles*, seasoned to the climate, and inured from their infancy to work, would perform it without its former weight, and would be able to realize his views without any of the disadvantages described.

Enabled then to put his plans into execution without any detriment to himself, let us consider the second consequence of the *increase*.

Every new piece of land, which he would clear and put into cultivation, would produce an additional quantity of sugar and rum. This additional quantity would pay its proportionate duty to the state; and how far the revenue is capable of increase, by these means, may be conceived, in some measure, from the following account.

| | <i>Acres of Land.</i> |
|--|-----------------------|
| In Jamaica alone are contained about | 3,500,000 |
| There are already cleared, opened, and applied to cultivation or pasture | 600,000 |
| The Savannahs include | 250,000 |
| The rocky, unplantable parts, roads, river-courses, and gullies | 300,000 |
| | 1,150,000 |

It appears from hence, that there remain in Jamaica alone, capable of cultivation, about 2,350,000 acres of land. Here then would be an ample field for speculation, for the employment of supernumerary slaves, and for an addition to the revenue.

In short, if we consider the first consequence of the *increase*, as visible in the *improvement* of the old land, and the second, as visible in the *clearing and cultivation of the new*, and combine them, it will appear, that a prodigious extension of revenue would unavoidably arise to this kingdom; and that the abolition of the slave trade would

* *Native Africans*, (says Mr. Long) unseasoned to the climate, and less able than the *Creoles* to bear the toil of cutting down thick woods, and clearing fresh land.—Long's History of Jamaica. Vol. I. Page 526.

be

be the means, in the course of time, of considerably augmenting its present opulence and power.

Such would be the situation of things in the colonies, were the trade abolished. Let us now, for a moment, turn our eyes to *Africa*, and let us look at the prospect there.

In the interval of time, from the rearing of the rising generation to the putting of them into employ, we should have been busy in establishing an honourable and civilizing commerce among the natives there. We should have been successful in our attempts, because we should have given them encouragement, (of which they are not insensible) and have embarked in it with emulation and zeal. We should have imported many of their variegated and valuable woods, their cotton, their rice, their indigo, their spices, and, perhaps, articles neither known at the present day, nor to be credited were they known and mentioned. Many of the productions of Africa would bear a duty in a little time, and if such a duty were affixed to them on importation, they would nevertheless come cheaper into our hands, than those of the same kind, if duty free, from another quarter. This improvement, therefore, which the revenue would derive in time from the new trade, is to be added to the account.

To sum up the whole. It is evident, that the revenue could not possibly be diminished, in consequence of the abolition of the slave trade, till the rising generation were put into employ. It is probable that it would be increased: and it is certain that it *could* be made, under proper regulations, to receive a greater augmentation in this, than in any former period of an equal length. But when the end of this period should have arrived, such an additional quantity of sugar and rum would be annually imported from the islands, and such an additional number of articles from the coast, that the revenue would arrive at a degree of extension, unknown in any former period, and not to be known till the riches of Africa are explored, or a system of humanity and population be adopted in our colonies.

These riches can never be discovered, this system never introduced, but by the abolition of the trade in slaves.

S E C T I O N II.

I have now examined one of the fatal consequences that would, in the opinion of the patrons of the trade, unavoidably arise to *this kingdom* from its abolition. A second is, that if such an event were to take place, *it would annihilate a considerable branch of our manufactures.*

It is astonishing to hear the exaggerated accounts that have been uniformly given of the exports of this country to the coast of Africa for slaves. One could scarcely conceive that people, who wished to support their cause, could have ventured to make assertions, that but a little knowledge of the African trade must immediately refute, but that their audacity is to be equalled only by their ignorance, and that a bad cause universally wants support.

It has been asserted by a person, who affects a considerable knowledge of this trade, that goods, to the amount of *two millions and an half*, are annually shipped to Africa; and it is asserted with no less confidence by the same, that the cargo of every ship is worth, on an average, *twelve thousand pounds.* These, and other absurdities, have been daily obtruded into our ears. The publick prints have had their share in proclaiming them; and the importance of the African trade has been sounded from all quarters.

It is very fortunate, however, that but a few points, well known, will be able to check these exaggerated accounts. The average value of a slave upon the coast, the number that are annually purchased, and the average-number carried in one ship, are sufficient documents for the refutation of the whole.

On a supposition then that goods to the amount of two millions and an half are annually shipped to the coast, and that one slave with another, including men, women, and boys, can be purchased by manufactures of the value of twenty pounds, (which is too high an allowance) even on such a supposition, the English must annually purchase *one hundred and twenty-five thousand* slaves; that is, they must purchase two-thirds more than they really do, or more than

than all the Europeans together, including themselves, from the river Senegal to the utmost limits of Angola.

Again, on a supposition that every cargo is worth twelve thousand pounds, it will appear from his own data, that two hundred and eight vessels must be annually employed in this trade, and that each of these must transport *six hundred slaves*. In other words, the English must carry more by *two hundred and forty* in each ship than were ever known to be the average number carried by any number of ships in any year.

Such are the admirable arguments, and such is the knowledge of the supporters of this trade. If they believe what they write, they must be ignorant indeed. If they are better informed, they must write against their own conviction, and must be considered as impostors, taking an advantage of the ignorance of the world, to serve an execrable cause.

The real value of the goods exported to Africa, in the year 1786, was about *eight hundred thousand pounds*. I speak from good authority; I believe, as good as can be obtained. The account too is consistent with itself. It may be checked either by the number of slaves purchased in that year, or by their value upon the coast. It will stand either of these ordeals; which is not the case with any of the monstrous accounts delivered by the advocates for the trade.

This being the whole amount of the exports, and more than one third of them being of Venetian and East-Indian manufacture conjointly, the real value of the British manufactures shipped to the coast in that year may be called *five hundred thousand pounds*. This is the prodigious branch, that would be annihilated by the abolition of the slave trade, being only one-fifth of the sum its advocates have reported, and scattered in too many places to be felt, and too insignificant to stop the abolition for a moment, even were it wholly lost.

But I deny that the whole of it would be lost were the slave trade *immediately* abolished. The slave vessels bring home many of the productions of Africa annually, such as ivory, palm-oil, long and malaguetta-pepper, part of which is paid for out of the amount of the British manu-

factures just mentioned. Whatever portion, therefore, of the exported goods was before expended in the purchase of these, by means of the slave vessels now mentioned, would still be expended by means of new wood-vessels, fitted out for their reception.

I assert farther, that if, on the abolition of the slave trade, we were to embark with ardour in the new intercourse that has been pointed out, and government would assist the plan, by encouraging the infant-settlement at Sierra Leon, by recalling the present African Governors, by appointing others on the coast whose principles and opinions would be favourable to the design, by directing the cultivation of every little spot in the vicinity of the forts, (which would shew an example to the natives) and by other means, the annual exports from this country to Africa would soon reach their present height, and a foundation be laid for such an extensive commerce, as would take them off, at a future period, in a quantity hitherto unknown.

That the Africans would soon engage in such a line of connection, is evident for many reasons. First, because they have acquired such a taste for our manufactures, that they could not easily relinquish them; and it is clear that they could not obtain them, at least for a length of time, to the extent of their present demands, by other means.

Secondly, because they have readily embarked in any new commercial plan that has been pointed out, and we have a right to argue from what has once been to what may again be.

Thirdly, because the merchant in this line, requiring less credit than the slave merchant, buying his goods five per cent. cheaper, employing less hands in one vessel, and knowing that his vessel would last * twice the time of the other, could afford the exported articles at a cheaper rate: and the Africans, like other people, are too sensible of their own interest, not to choose that system of commerce which would be most advantageous, were it pointed out.

This kind of intercourse then being once established,

* It is astonishing what an effect the heat and stench, arising from the slaves confined between the decks, have upon the timbers of the vessels. This effect is so great, that a slave vessel is considered at Liverpool as lasting only half the time of another.

let us mark the consequences. The slave trade takes annually from Africa a prodigious number of its inhabitants. By the abolition of it, a less number would be taken away, or, which is the same thing, a greater number would be added, so that from this circumstance alone, there would be an *additional consumption of our manufactures within the same space.*

The slave trade too has been hitherto an insuperable impediment to the civilization of the Africans: but the new commerce would have a contrary effect. It would gradually change their laws, which are now mostly adapted to the former. It would gradually alter their opinions and habits. It would soften and polish their manners, and would bring them to a state of refinement, though not immediately great in itself, yet great in comparison of their former state. This civilization would be productive of the most beneficial effects to ourselves: for in proportion as we civilize a people, we *increase their wants*, and we should create therefore, from this circumstance alone, another source of *additional consumption of our manufactures* even within the *same space.*

This being the case, inestimable would be the advantages which the kingdom would experience from the abolition of the trade in slaves. But if to these considerations we add, that the new intercourse, being established on a principle of greater gain, would extend itself every year, would make its way into the interior country: and that in the very exercise of it, nation after nation would be civilized, it is evident, that there would be a *perpetually growing demand* for our manufactures, and that the consumption of them in Africa would arrive at a degree of extension, which none but the most comprehensive minds can be capable of conceiving.

Such, in time, would be the situation of the demand for our manufactures on the *coast of Africa*, were the slave trade abolished: nor would that in the *colonies* be less pleasing. The great increase of cultivators, that would unavoidably arise there in consequence of the abolition, would of course occasion a great increase of demand for our manufactures. Their condition too being improved, and their wants multiplied, they would demand them in

greater abundance, and I need hardly add, that they would demand them of a better sort.

Nor would necessary or ornamental apparel, or domestick utensils, or articles of fancy, be the only British commodities for which the demand would increase there. When the waste lands were put into cultivation, new scenes would be opened, and new wants created. The new labourers must have their bills, their axes, and their hoes. There must be new materials for building, new stills and mill-cases, new locks and staples, new iron work for machines, and many other articles, too numerous to be particularly described. All these must be purchased, kept in repair, and renewed: and they would afford to the British manufacturer an *additional* and permanent employ.

In short, there are few subjects more pleasing in the contemplation than this. And so far would the abolition of the slave trade be from *annihilating a considerable branch of our manufactures*, that it would open many *additional sources*, both in *Africa* and the *colonies*, for their consumption, and would procure a vent, in the course of time, for such a quantity, as, if compared with the present branch of them exported there, would render it insignificant and mean.

S E C T I O N III.

The patrons of the slave trade have considered the annihilation of a branch of our revenue, and the annihilation of a branch of our manufactures, as two of the fatal consequences that would arise to *this* kingdom from its abolition. There is yet a third. It is said, that if such an event were to take place, the different towns concerned in this trade would, from the variety of distress that would be occasioned in them, *receive a considerable shock*.

To investigate this point, I shall divide the cities, towns, and villages, that have any connection with this trade, into two kinds, namely, *manufacturing and commercial*; and I shall suppose for a moment the abolition of the trade to have taken place,

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With respect to the *manufacturing* towns, there are none, where the inhabitants work solely for the African trade. The most conspicuous is Manchester, which supplies it annually with goods, almost to as great an amount as all the rest of them put together. The next is Birmingham. In each of these are distinct houses for this trade, and which have no connection with any other.

That the town of Manchester would receive a shock by the abolition of the slave trade, though the value of the goods, annually furnished for it, is great, is too absurd not to be ridiculed by those, who are acquainted with the nature, situation, or extent of the manufactures of that important place.

It is certain, that if some particular arts in this kingdom were to be suppressed, those who have been brought up to them would be destitute for a time. They could not become artists directly in another line, and, till they could turn their hands to some other kind of employ, they would suffer. But this is not the case with the labouring manufacturer of Manchester for the African trade. The same person who works for this could immediately turn his hand to the different branches of manufacture now there. At this moment there are many infant arts to receive them, and more than sufficient scope to employ that capital, which is now in the African, in other foreign markets. Nor need there be, nor is it likely that there would, a single labouring manufacturer, who would suffer by the abolition of the slave trade, so long as he was willing to work.

With respect to Birmingham, the goods which are made there for the African trade, are unworthy of comparison in point of value with those which are made at Manchester for the same. They consist principally of guns. But the whole branch of it is so insignificant in itself, and bears so mean a proportion to the general manufactory of the place, that the change of fashion only in a button, has occasioned, and will still occasion, greater distress to the labouring manufacturers there, than the abolition of the whole trade in slaves.

If the reader wished to have these assertions confirmed, I might state to him, that when the slave trade began
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to excite the attention of the publick, a meeting of the inhabitants was called by advertisement both at Manchester and at Birmingham on this subject. That these meetings were numerously attended. That they consisted of the most respectable persons, in point of property and character, in the two towns. That there was not a dissentient voice in either of them on the occasion : but that committees were formed, and still continue much to their honour to exist, to effect the abolition of the trade.

In the rest of the *manufacturing* towns the different branches for the African market are very small, and bear no kind of proportion to the different manufactories of the place. The same house too, which supplies the African, is connected with other trades ; so that if the slave trade were immediately abolished, no inconvenience could be felt in these, except in the loss of sale of such chains or instruments of torture, as are ready made : and it is only to be lamented, that the fabricators of these would suffer so little, as they would do, by the change.

It appears then from hence, that the manufacturing towns of this kingdom that are concerned in the African trade, would not receive that considerable shock, which it is pretended would be occasioned by its abolition. On the other hand we are to consider, that vessels would still go to the coast, and would go for such of its productions as the slave vessels formerly took away ; and if to this consideration we add, that a new trade, such as I have described in the first part of my work, might be established there, such an additional number of manufacturers would be soon employed, and such an extra accumulation of wealth arise to the different towns, as would give them a much greater share of importance, even than they possess at the present day. By the people of Manchester, however, the advantages would be particularly felt. Not to mention a larger exportation of manufacturers than before to the same coast, the single circumstance of obtaining their cotton from Africa would be inestimably great. This cotton, if we except the Persian, to which it is equal in rank, is the finest of any on the globe. It is this uncommon fineness that would render it so peculiarly valuable : and of such importance would it be in the eye of the
Manchester

Manchester manufacturer to obtain it, that there is no event which he could wish for, in point of interest, more than the abolition of the trade in slaves.

Having taken into consideration the *manufacturing*, I come now to the *commercial* towns that are concerned in this trade. These are only three, namely, London, Bristol, and Liverpool.

The great cities of London and Bristol do not possess together in this employ so many as *forty* vessels. To suppose, therefore, that any kind of distress could be felt by the total secession of these, or any kind of stagnation take place, would be to expose myself to derision: for I might as well suppose, that if forty drops of water were to be taken from a bucket, they would be missed.

That the town of Liverpool would be greatly affected by the blow, though it employs so many vessels, and has a greater share in the trade than London and Bristol together, is a position, the absurdity of which may be soon shewn.

It has long been a mistake, that the town of Liverpool, which was formerly but a fishing village, is indebted for its present grandeur and opulence to the slave trade. No opinion was ever more erroneous than this. I shall therefore mention some of the principal causes that have contributed to bring it into its present state.

The first has been the *free admission of strangers*, in consequence of a politick exemption from many of those dues, to which, as strangers, they would have been liable in another place.

This has encouraged many to settle there. To supply these again, in all their respective wants, others have additionally come. Thus a constant addition of new families has been made to the original or the old.

Nor have less advantages been experienced in another point of view, by the same means. Each of the new settlers has brought with him his different pursuits and schemes; has had his emulation; has supported an home or a foreign trade, according as his connections lay.

To this free admission then of strangers, which has induced many to settle, unfettered, with their different pursuits, is to be attributed, on one hand, an increase of the

the population, and, on the other, of the mercantile intercourse of the place.

A second cause of the rise and grandeur of Liverpool has been the *salt trade*.

Salt, which may be considered as its staple commodity, and which is collected from the neighbouring mines, is brought there in such quantities as almost exceed belief. Many vessels are employed in the exportation of this article. This has not failed to increase the navigation of the place.

But the increase of the navigation and opulence of Liverpool is to be attributed to it in another way, which will be best seen by the following account.

Some merchants of the north, hearing a few years back, that this article could be purchased cheaper at Liverpool than at any other place, sent two or three of their vessels for a supply. The captains of these, on their return home, reported, that all those nations of the north, who had no salt-works of their own, could not only lay in the article in abundance and cheaper there, but could also lay in their assortments of *tobacco, sugar, and other American produce*, as well as at the London or other markets; and till this time they had, from their ignorance of the power of Liverpool to supply them in this respect, been confined to these.

Considering, therefore, that it was much more to their advantage to go to Liverpool for one of the articles described, and that they fared as well in the rest, it was their interest upon the whole to declare in favour of the place. These and other vessels came afterwards pouring in for their salt, and laid in their foreign assortments at the same time. This immediately *gave rise*, or rather *an addition to two foreign trades*, namely, the *West-Indian* and *American*, to supply them.

The salt trade therefore has had an important share in the present grandeur of Liverpool. It has not only increased its navigation by the exportation of that article, its staple commodity, but also its navigation and opulence, by inducing vessels, on account of its cheapness, to resort there, which, but for this extraordinary cheapness, would have gone to another place. These vessels pay their
dockage,

dockage, are often in want of repairs, and by taking off a part of the foreign imports of Liverpool, contribute towards its opulence, and the support of a foreign trade.

It may, perhaps, be not amiss to introduce a circumstance here, which may be considered, in some measure, as confirming what has been hitherto said on this subject. Debating societies were held in Liverpool, as in London, in the winter of the year 1786, but with this difference, that many more respectable people exercised their oratory in the former, than in the latter place. At one of these the causes of the present grandeur and opulence of the town of Liverpool were the subject of discussion for the night. Many merchants, and one or two of great respectability and commercial knowledge, joined in the debate; and though the slave trade was advanced by a person there to have been the principal cause, he was obliged to relinquish his position, as wholly false; and it was determined, that other circumstances, but particularly the *free admission of strangers*, and the *salt trade*, had been the means of the present grandeur and opulence of the town.

A third cause of the wealth and importance of Liverpool has been the prodigious increase of the population of Lancashire. The great increase of inhabitants there has not failed to increase the trade of the former place, to supply them with sugar,* wine, and other foreign commodities. To such a degree of populousness has this county already arrived, that it is supposed to contain as many inhabitants as Middlesex, though London is included in the computation. Such a body as this will ever command and support an extensive foreign trade.

A fourth cause has been the very rapid and great extension of the manufactures of Manchester. The people there, instead of procuring their cotton as formerly, when the demand for it was small, by the way of London, procure it now chiefly from Liverpool; and instead of sending their manufactures as before to London for exportation, export them to foreign parts through the same medium.

* I am credibly informed, that about fifty years ago, the whole consumption of Manchester did not exceed *two pipes* of wine annually, which were brought on horses from Preston—a quantity not equal to the individual consumption of many of its present opulent and hospitable manufacturers.

Thus

Thus by procuring the article when raw, and exporting it when manufactured, by means of Liverpool, they have given birth to a new merchandize, have increased the foreign trade, and contributed to the riches of the place.

A fifth is to be attributed to the various canals which have been lately made, and with which that part of the country is intersected. There is now a communication from Liverpool by water to various parts inland, and indeed to the very opposite sea. Whole counties, and districts of people, that were formerly supplied with foreign produce from other places, are now supplied with it from this. This new intercourse, by the means now stated, has contributed, perhaps of all others the most largely, to increase the trade and opulence of the town.

These are some of the principal causes of that commercial importance which we see in the town of Liverpool at the present day; and I have made a digression in relating them for the purpose only of removing an opinion, long prevalent, that this town, which was formerly a fishing village, is indebted for her present rank to the prosecution of the slave trade.

To return. That Liverpool would receive a considerable shock by the abolition of the trade in slaves is improbable, when we consider those resources, that have been now mentioned; those natural resources, I may say, which are inseparably connected with it, and which nothing but some great and unexpected revolution can take away. But as there are some who would assert, that the secession of eighty ships from this trade would occasion great embarrassment and confusion in the place, that the proprietors would not know how to employ them, that shipwrights, carpenters, and others, would want work, and experience distress, I shall make a few observations more on the same subject.

When the slave ships have discharged their cargoes in the West-Indies, they prepare for returning home. Some of them take in a small portion of West-Indian produce, others not, according as they can get it, or have time to stay.

From hence it is manifest, that the produce of the West-Indies comes to us by two means of conveyance: first, by means of those vessels that are employed in going backwards

backwards and forwards for this purpose only, and which I may distinguish by the name of vessels in the *natural* trade: secondly, by means of the slave vessels. These carry the overplus, or such produce as remains over and above that which the vessels in the natural trade take off in the same time.

This overplus is regular; that is, a certain number of slave vessels will uniformly take away from the West-Indies a certain quantity of their produce in a given time. To ascertain therefore how much this overplus is, will be to ascertain the opening that would present itself, or the number of Liverpool slave ships that would find immediate employ, were the trade abolished.

The following is an account of such West-Indian produce as was brought home by fifty vessels of that description, taken promiscuously, or as they returned after each other into port.

| | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------|---------|
| Sugar 758 hogheads | 152 tierces | 8 barrels | — | — |
| Rum 102 puncheons | 4 hhds. | — | — | — |
| Cotton 1364 bales | 1532 bags | 951 pockets | 82 packs | — |
| Indigo 4 tierces | 4 casks | 8 boxes | 9 bar. | 1 keg |
| Coffee 18 puncheons | 601 hhds. | 15 tierces | 126 bar. | 80 bags |
| Sarsaparilla 126 bundles | — | — | — | — |
| Pimento 1 hoghead | 3 tierces | 2 barrels | 7 bags | — |
| Ginger 3 puncheons | — | — | — | — |
| Pepper 77 puncheons | — | — | — | — |
| Tortoise-shell 11 barrels | — | — | — | — |
| Logwood 511 tons | — | — | — | — |
| Mahogany 151 logs | 1042 planks | — | — | — |
| Nicaragua wood 469 tons | 3480 pieces | 8988 pounds | — | — |
| Fustick 557 tons | — | — | — | — |
| Lignum Vitæ 50 tons | — | — | — | — |

I apprehend, that *fifty* slave vessels, the amount of whose cargoes on their return from the West Indies has been specified as above, will be quite sufficient, in point of number, to serve as a ground-work for any calculation on this subject. This being supposed, I shall state that the produce above described is sufficient to employ 4000 tons of shipping, that the number of vessels that sailed from Liverpool to the coast of Africa in the year 1787 were about eighty, that they measured 14,012 tons, and that it follows from these data, that there would be an immediate opening in the West India trade for *twenty-three* ships of the same average burthen as the slave vessels: add to this, that

that as the productions of the coast, annually brought to Liverpool by the latter, would make also an opening in the wood trade for *five* more, there would be an immediate employment for *twenty-eight* of those of its vessels that are now employed in the slave trade.

With respect to the rest, the growing resources of Liverpool, and the new trades that present themselves, would engage many, and it is probable, from the adventurous spirit of the people there, that there would not be, at the end of twelve months from the abolition, ten vessels out of employ; a number which has often been withdrawn from this trade in one year, and the withdrawing of which has been too insignificant to be felt.

It is evident therefore that the town of Liverpool could not possibly feel a shock by the abolition of the slave trade. This abolition, on the other hand, would prepare the way for a new commercial establishment on the coast; and if such a trade, in all its various branches, were established there; as is capable of being introduced, not only the navigation, but the opulence and importance of Liverpool would be carried, by many degrees, beyond their present extent; nor is it easy to say at what distance a line could be drawn from their present bounds, to which they could not be made, from the vast and inexhaustible resources of Africa, to arrive in time.

To sum up the contents of the three last sections.—If we consider that the *revenue* could not possibly be diminished by the abolition of the slave trade, but that, in the course of time, it would be inevitably increased; if we consider that the *exportation of our manufactures* to Africa might be diminished for a year or two, but only to recover its former height, and then to proceed to a degree of extension, almost incredible, if compared with that at the present day; and if again we consider that the *manufacturing and commercial towns* of this kingdom would be so far from receiving a shock, that they would derive in future the most important advantages from the change; then is the slave trade, *additionally impolitic*, for as much as its abolition could not be immediately injurious, but would be attended, in a little time, in all the instances now mentioned, with the happiest effects.

CHAP. III.

C H A P. III.

It is not improbable, but that some of the advocates for slavery may stop here, and raise the following objection to some of the principal assertions that have been made in the second part of the work.

“ You have said, that if the slave trade were abolished, the planters would breed from their present stock, that the revenue could not possibly be diminished, and that the manufacturing and commercial towns would feel its annihilation so little, as to be almost insensible of the change. But this is only a matter of speculation. Others, who have thought on the same subject, have come to a different conclusion. It is by facts alone that we ought to be guided in a matter that is of so much importance as the present case.”

To this I reply, that I will meet their objection, and that I will rest these consequences of the abolition of the slave trade, as far as a reference can be had, upon facts alone.

There was a time, during the late war, when the slave trade may be considered as having been nearly abolished. This is the proper time for a reference of this kind; and that such a time is to be found will be evident from the following account.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| In the year 1772 sailed from the different ports of Great Britain for the Coast of | | | | } 175 vessels. |
| Africa | - | - | - | |
| 1773 | - | - | - | 151 |
| 1774 | - | - | - | 167 |
| 1775 | - | - | - | 152 |
| 1776 | - | - | - | 101 |
| 1777 | - | - | - | 58 |
| 1778 | - | - | - | 41 |
| 1779 | - | - | - | 28 |

It appears from this account, that in the year 1772, the year preceding the war, *one hundred and seventy-five* vessels were fitted out at the different ports of Great Britain

Britain for the coast of Africa, and that in the year 1779 they were reduced to *twenty-eight*. The slave trade, therefore, may be considered as having been nearly abolished in this period. Now, we may all of us know, if we inquire, what were the effects of withdrawing, in the course of six years, *one hundred and forty-seven* vessels from this trade. If it should appear that these effects were not detrimental, that the planter bred from his stock, that the revenue was not diminished, that the different towns before mentioned were in as flourishing a condition in the year 1779, when the African trade was least, as in the year 1772, when it was at its greatest height, then it may be concluded, that the reasoning in the preceding chapters is true, and that *facts*, as well as reasoning, evince, that none of those fatal effects, foreboded by the advocates for slavery, are to be apprehended by the abolition of the trade.

To begin with these effects. Nothing is more certain than that the planters, at the beginning of the war, foreseeing that their usual supplies would be cut off, or, in other words, the slave trade annihilated, changed the system of management on their plantations, and that they bred from their then stock. The effects of their conduct, in the encouragement of population, are visible at the present day; for out of 450,000 slaves, to be reckoned on our islands, 350,000 of these are Creoles.

It is clear also, that a branch of the revenue was not annihilated during that period of the war, of which I have before spoken.

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| For, in the year 1772, was im- | | |
| ported into England | - | } 1,766,422 cwt. of sugar |
| 1773 | - | 1,733,793 |
| 1774 | - | 1,963,578 |
| 1775 | - | 1,940,059 |
| 1776 | - | 1,669,071 |
| 1777 | - | 1,336,037 |
| 1778 | - | 1,404,995 |
| 1779 | - | 1,441,943 |

From hence we collect, that in the year 1772, when the African trade was at its height, 1,766,422 cwt. of sugar

sugar was imported into this country, and that 1,441,943 cwt. was imported, when the trade was nearly lost. A branch therefore of the revenue still remained. But it will be said, that the quantity of sugar imported in the year 1772, was certainly much greater than that in the year 1779. I allow it. But I reply, that in this, and the two preceding years, the enemy had collected their strength, that the difference of importation is to be ascribed to captures, and that less sugar was not made, though less was brought to market by the chance of war in the year 1779 than in the year 1772, notwithstanding that *one hundred and forty-seven* vessels had been withdrawn from the African trade.

I come now to consider the situation of the manufacturing and commercial towns at the two periods assigned.

In the year 1772, the manufacturers of Manchester worked for an *hundred and seventy-five* vessels. In the year 1779 they worked only for *twenty-eight*. Notwithstanding this, there were none of them out of employ. They had engaged themselves in other branches of manufacture, and the trade of Manchester was in a more flourishing situation in the latter than in the former period; a fact, which many of its respectable inhabitants can testify.

With respect to Liverpool, * a few observations will be sufficient.

T A B L E I.

| In the year 1772 sailed from Liverpool for the coast of Africa | | | } 100 vessels. |
|---|---|---|----------------|
| | - | - | |
| 1773 | - | - | 105 |
| 1774 | - | - | 92 |
| 1775 | - | - | 81 |
| 1776 | - | - | 57 |
| 1777 | - | - | 31 |
| 1778 | - | - | 26 |
| 1779 | - | - | 11 |

* I omit London and Bristol, as having had an inconsiderable share in the trade.

T A B L E II.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|-----------|
| In the year 1772 the dock-duties of | | | } £. 4552 |
| Liverpool amounted to - | | | |
| 1773 | - | - | 4725 |
| 1774 | - | - | 4580 |
| 1775 | - | - | 5384 |
| 1776 | - | - | 5064 |
| 1777 | - | - | 4610 |
| 1778 | - | - | 4649 |
| 1779 | - | - | 4957 |

From these tables it appears, that when Liverpool had *one hundred* vessels in the African trade, the dock-duties amounted to £. 4552, and that when these vessels were reduced to *eleven*, the dock-duties rose to £. 4957. Other facts, of a similar nature, might be added here, but that it is too well known that Liverpool was in a more flourishing situation in the year 1779, than in the year 1772; that there was no want of employ; and that none of those consequences were realized, which are foreboded by the patrons of the trade.

It is manifest from the general sketch now given, that we have seen, during the late war, what would be the effects of abolishing the slave trade; for no less than *one hundred and forty-seven* vessels were taken out of it during that period, whereas there are only *one hundred and thirty-seven* in employ at the present day; and we have a right to infer, that if the revenue, and manufacturing and commercial towns, did not then suffer by withdrawing so great a number from the trade, they would hardly now suffer by withdrawing a less. The reasoning, therefore, contained in the three preceding chapters of the second part of the work, will stand good, till the facts, mentioned in this, shall be disproved; and I am too well satisfied of their authenticity not to know that they cannot be contradicted.

CHAP. IV.

C H A P. IV.

The consequences, that are considered as likely to result from the abolition of the slave trade, have been hitherto canvassed under two heads; namely, such as would seriously affect *the colonies*, and such as would seriously affect *this kingdom*. There is yet another to be examined, but of a different complexion from the former. It is said, that "if the English abolish the slave trade, the French will take it up, and that the latter (politically speaking) will derive *great advantages* from the measure."

That the French would take it up, if the English abolished it, is, like most of the assertions of the advocates for slavery, but a bare conjecture; notwithstanding that it is assumed and delivered with as much confidence as if it were a fact.

There are many circumstances that warrant me in asserting, that the French would be unable to *take it up*,* were they so inclined; but that they would even continue it is improbable.

First, because a society has been lately established in France, on the same principle as that of London, for the purpose of effecting the abolition of the slave trade among the French; and I assert with equal pleasure and confidence, that some of the first people in France have shewn themselves heartily disposed to attend to the object of their institution.

Secondly, because if no such humane motives impelled the French, as are discoverable among them, they would hardly give us the credit of abolishing the slave trade, however we might deserve it, upon the principle of humanity. They are well aware that nations are guided by motives, that are termed *political*; that if we were to put a stop to the trade, it would be probably from the consideration of its *impolicy*; and that if it were *politick* in us to abolish it, it would be *equally so* in them.

* That is, to supply themselves with that number of slaves with which we supply them at present, and to become the carriers for the Spaniards.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, because they would never suffer us to push a new trade in the natural productions of Africa, without following our example; and they have already purchased a considerable tract of Land at Cape Verd, where they are ready to begin, whenever we shew them the way, if not to be beforehand with us in the advantages resulting from such a trade.

These are reasons that have weighed sufficiently with me, to induce me to suppose, that the French would at any rate give up the slave trade, if we relinquished it, and these reasons are much stronger than any that I can find on the other side of the question. However, as this is only a matter of conjecture, and as any opponent has a right, if he is better informed, to argue the contrary, I will suppose, that when the English relinquish it, the French will not only continue it as at present, but *take it up*.

Let us then consider the consequences; for it is said, that they will derive *great advantages* from the measure.

In the first place, we shall transfer to them a *losing* trade; in the second, one that will be *the grave of their marine*. The latter is too important a consideration to be passed over without some remarks.

The French are now paying uncommon attention, as it is well known, to their marine, and look up to their American possessions for its support. A great part of the slaves that assist in the cultivation of these, are furnished by our means. Every lot of them, which we import, or cause to be imported there, assists them in the completion of their present views. But if we relinquish the slave trade, and if, on the other hand, they become the importers of their own slaves, the scene will be totally reversed. For in the importation of every lot of * *nine hundred* effective slaves into the uncultivated parts of St. Domingo, they will make *twenty-five*, but lose † *sixty* seamen; and in every such importation into any of their old settled plantations, they will lose *sixty*, and make *none*. Thus, by

* See Page 79.

† This is what the English would lose in supplying the French with 900 effective slaves; and as the latter lose more than the former, in proportion to the tonnage of their ships, the statement is much within bounds.

becoming

becoming the carriers of their own slaves, they will find, in every case, a considerable balance of loss to their marine; and, by becoming the carriers of slaves to the Spanish settlements, (which is included in the idea of taking up the trade) this loss will be so increased, as to become, in the scale of their naval importance, of the most serious concern.

These then are some of the advantages that the French would experience by taking up the slave trade; let us now, for a moment, advert to some of those that would result to us, who relinquished it.

In the first place we should be prosecuting a new and profitable commerce in the productions of Africa: and to that nation, which first made its establishments there, the most advantages would accrue.

In the second place we should be adding to the strength of our marine: first, by saving those seamen, who, to the amount of some hundreds, now annually perish; and, secondly, by the loss which the French would sustain in the prosecution of the trade: for whatever loss is in this way incurred by those, whom at any future period we are to meet upon the seas, such loss is to be carried over to our side of the account, as so much additional gain: nor would any lot of *nine hundred* effective slaves be delivered into the uncultivated parts of St. Domingo, or the old established plantations among the French, but *thirty-five* seamen in the first instance, and *sixty* in the second, might be considered to be added to our marine.

In the third place the slaves of the British planters being attached to the soil by birth, being bound to their masters by gratitude, and living among their relatives and friends, would be a firm and faithful protection to the islands in the time of war. A part of the naval and military force, formerly sent for their defence, could then act on the offensive: whereas the French, on the other hand, would not only be tied down in these particulars, but would have to defend their islands, in conjunction with a people who had been robbed of the natural rights of men, and who would seize the first opportunity that offered of gratifying their revenge.

To

To sum up the whole. If the French, whenever we should abolish the slave trade, would co-operate with us in the plan, then would the cause of humanity be essentially served; for even the advocates for slavery allow, that if the two nations were to coincide in this particular, the business would be effectually done: but if, on the other hand, they should persevere in the continuance of it, and enter into it more extensively than before, then would the highest political advantages result to us, who relinquished it; for if we could lay our hands on our hearts, and say that the slave trade was either humane or just, there are few events that we could wish for more to the interest of this kingdom than that, when the English relinquished it, the French would take it up.

C H A P. V.

I have now replied to all the arguments of any consequence that I have ever heard advanced in favour of the policy of the slave trade, or against the expediency of its abolition. It only remains, therefore, that I should collect into one point of view the substance of what has been said throughout the whole of the present work.

It has appeared, that the slave trade, considered abstractedly by itself, is of *no emolument to the nation*; that it is *unprofitable*, on the whole, *to individuals*; and that it is the *grave of our seamen*, destroying more of them in one year, than all the other trades of Great Britain, when put together, destroy in two.

It has appeared, on the other hand, that the trade which might be substituted for it in the natural productions of Africa, if considered in the same light, would, by affording an inexhaustible mine of wealth to our dyers and artificers in wood, by enabling us to break the monopoly of the Dutch in spices, by repaying us for the loss of America, and by becoming the cheapest market for all sorts of raw materials for our manufacturers, be of *great national advantage*.

It

It has appeared, secondly, that such a trade would be highly *profitable to individuals*.

Thirdly, that it would be a *nursery for our seamen*, not only to cherish and preserve them, but to return them in health and vigour, in case of an emergency, in a few weeks.

Fourthly, that it could not possibly *interfere* with the productions of our *present colonies*.

This is the first statement that may be collected from a perusal of the present work.

To proceed. It has appeared also, that, if the slave trade were abolished, such an abolition could not be productive of any immediate detriment, but would be attended with *future gain*.

First, the planter would be relieved from a continual source of embarrassment and distress; his property would be increased, his annual returns would be larger, he would feel himself in an independent situation, in point of subsistence, both in peace and war, and he would have the unspeakable satisfaction of going to his bed fearless of any private machinations, and in full confidence that his property, as well as his person, would be secure.

Secondly, his slaves, necessarily experiencing, on one hand, a diminution of their former rigours, and raised, by certain regulations, to positive advantages on the other, they would be admitted to a considerable portion of happiness, and their condition be considerably improved.

Thirdly, the islands would be safe in the time of war.

Fourthly, new sources would be opened for the improvement of the revenue.

Fifthly, new sources would be opened for the consumption of our manufactures.

This is the second statement that may be collected from the present work; and I think it is evident, upon a mature consideration of both, unless a person wilfully shuts his eyes, that the slave trade is (as I undertook to shew in the introductory chapter) as *impolitic as it is inhuman and unjust*. For when we consider that this trade, by destroying our marine, is not only a *political evil* in itself,

K

but

but that it *hinders the introduction of one*, to which if it were compared in point of individual or national emolument, it would be like an island to a continent, or a river to a sea; and that it *prevents the existence of those important advantages both to the colonies and this kingdom* that have been described above; we may safely say, that whatever arguments the *moralist* is able to collect from the light of reason, or the *man of humanity* from his feelings, the statesman is able to collect others from the source of *policy*, that call equally aloud for its ABOLITION.

F I N I S.

E R R A T U M.

In page 88, and line 31, for *Antigua*, read *St. Christopher's*.



